

A Treatise on Fair & Equitable Gear Treatment

Hey everyone,

Access to gear is what makes our club great... Well not just great, but *magnificent*.

That being said, gear is also very expensive. We recognize that not everyone is an expert on how to keep gear in good condition, but you should *always* return gear to the gear room in the condition you got it (aside from normal wear and tear). We want our gear to last for multiple seasons while in service to hundreds of members. Proper cleaning and storage are essential for this. So, we've composed a guide on the gear for all our major sports and their respective cleaning requirements (using both professional and Outdoors officer input). Please refer to this guide whenever you check out gear.

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Backpacking

Tents:

Before your trip, practice pitch your tent to ensure you have all the stakes, guylines and accessories.

During your trip, avoid leaving your tent set up in direct sun for extended periods of time (or leave the fly on over your tent, since the fly is more UV resistant). Keep boots outside, don't leave food or toiletries strewn about the tent, and do not bring any pets inside.

At the end of your trip:

- 1) Shake your tent out, to clean out dirt and debris
- 2) Start in the middle when you break down your poles, to evenly distribute tension along the cord
- 3) Dry before stuff-sacking as much as possible. Drape your tent & fly over a branch if you can. If you must pack up in wet conditions, dry the tent **AS SOON AS YOU RETURN TO GROUNDS**.
- 4) If the tent is wet and muddy, you absolutely must clean the mud off of it before returning it to a gear room. *Use a non-abrasive sponge, cold water, and a non-detergent soap. Don't use anything scented because it can ruin the tent's water-repellant coating.*
- 5) Roll up your tent rather than stuffing it like a sleeping bag.

Biggest takeaway: There is no such thing as too much drying. Do not return a crusty, dirty, sandy, bird dropping-covered, neglected tent to the gear room. Do not let caked mud dry. Make sure the tent is 100% dry before storing it.

Sleeping Bags:

During your trip, protect your bag from the ground. Some of us prefer laying tents out sacrificial offerings in the frigid night over a tent (and that's okay! We still love you!). If you are this person, put a pad down on the ground first. Air out your sleeping bag daily.

At the end of your trip:

- 1) Dry your bag before stuff-sacking as much as possible (just like the tent!)
- 2) To stuff a stuff sack, start with the foot of the sleeping bag with the zipper partially closed. Push the foot of the bag firmly into the bottom of the bag firmly into the bottom of the stuff sack and stuff evenly as you go up. This releases air & makes it easier to stuff
- 3) SPOT CLEAN the mud off your sleeping bag! Even fine dust or sand. Use non-detergent soap and water with a gentle towel, sponge, toothbrush, or even your bare hands. By holding the shell or liner fabric away from the insulation, you can wash and rinse the area without getting the inside fill wet. Avoid using too much soap.

Biggest takeaway: How you store your bag affects its lifespan. This starts from the moment you check out the gear, until you turn it back in. Keep it dry at all times (seems similar to the tent, right?). Allow the bag to dry naturally away from direct heat sources.

Backpack Care

Wear and tear is inevitable but taking care of your backpack can increase its lifetime. Here are some general tips:

- 1) Wipe down regularly with a damp cloth to minimize the buildup of dirt while camping
- 2) Keep water out (AGAIN, DRY YOUR GEAR)
- 3) Pack sensibly. Pack anything that may cause damage to the bag (ie. poles, knives, any sharp edges) in a way that they won't pierce through the material
- 4) A lot of seasoned backpackers debate how to pack a rucksack. [Here is a general guide](#)
- 5) Spot clean the mud off your pack.

Climbing

Make sure to keep all gear off the ground while out climbing at the crag, it should either be on your harness or in/on a bag at all times.

When returning from a trip

1. Make sure every piece of gear is clean of dirt and grime
2. Connect all quickdraws before returning
3. Remove all dirt and sticks from the rope bag

Caving

Helmets, Headlamps, and Gloves:

- 1) Rinse all gear with water
- 2) Scrub all the mud and dirt off
- 3) Wash gear thoroughly with bleach and/or soap (as appropriate)
 - This is vital to prevent the spread of WNS (as outlined in the caving manual)
- 4) Set it out to dry

Gear must be returned to the gear room clean and dry.

Note: You should also wash your personal gear (backpack, clothing, boots, etc.) in the same fashion.

Kayaking

Kayaks & Canoes

-Make sure there isn't too much dirt or sand on the inside or outside of the boat, especially the inside. Spray down and rinse out as much as needed to get all of it out.

Skirts/ Helmets/ Life Jackets/ Dry tops and pants

-All gear should also be dirt and sand free and returned dry. Make sure to empty any trash from life jacket pockets.

Rafts/ SUPs

-Dry, dirt free, and folded back in their proper configuration. Returned with pump and any other gear.

Biggest takeaway: Lay ALL WET GEAR outside to dry *immediately* after your trip so that it doesn't mildew. All gear should be returned dirt and sand free and DRY.

Mountain Biking

Our Mountain Bikes are very costly to buy and maintain - namely maintain. Thus, we need members to take extremely good care of our bikes both on the trails and off them. Failure to adhere to the following guidelines will likely cause preventable wear and tear that will jeopardize the ability for members to use those bikes in the future, so please follow them!

Bike Storage Guidelines:

- **Bikes MUST be stored inside** to protect it from rain damage.
- **Bikes must be stored in a secure location** (e.g. inside a house with locked doors) or locked securely to something if there is nowhere safe to leave it alone for any period of time. We once had a \$1500 club bike stolen from the basement of a house with unlocked doors.. Keep those puppies safe! The club provides sturdy locks that you can check out with the bike if you need it.

Commuting:

- **Our mountain bikes are NOT for commuting.** This is a *gross misuse* of club gear that can quickly ramp up the wear and tear on the bike. If you are found commuting with our bikes, you are jeopardizing your ability to check out bikes again in the future.

Bike Usage Guidelines:

- Treat the bike gently when handling it and putting it down, try to avoid scratching the frame or its paint.
- When riding, shift gears **ONLY** while you're pedaling - otherwise you risk an abrupt gear shift than can break a part of the drivetrain.
- When riding, if you begin to feel a large resistance in your pedal strokes combined with unusual sounds coming from the bike (aside from any normal gear shift crunching/resistance), **STOP IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT** try to pedal through it - the chain has likely become misaligned, or some other part of the bike is not functioning correctly. If you continue pedaling, you risk breaking the chain or another component of the bike. Dismount the bike and try to see if anything is out of the ordinary, especially with the chain. If you're on the trail, attempt to fix the issue if you can or walk the bike out if you can't. Whenever you have the chance, contact the officers about the issue as soon as you can if it persists.

Bike Return Guidelines

- Be sure to wipe off any excess dirt or grime on the bike before returning it.
- If you had any mechanical issues with the bike while it was checked out, inform the officers via email or when you return the bike.

Service Trips

Shovels, Trowels, Hoes, Gardening Tools, etc.

With service tools, it is A-ok for them to get dirty. That's what they're for. In fact, if they're not dirty, that's probably your cue to put some more elbow grease into what you're doing. That being said, please make sure they're clean when you check them back in.

To clean:

- Wash/ rinse all the dirt or mud off of them (tool handles included)
- If you've been picking up trash, please wash them with a disinfectant of some sort (Lysol works fine)
- IMPORTANT: If the tools have come in contact with any poisonous plants of any kind (i.e. Poison Ivy), please clean the affected parts with rubbing alcohol.

Gloves

- Gently wash/rinse as much dirt or mud off of them as you can
- Hang them out to dry (DO NOT put in dryer)
- IMPORTANT: If the gloves have touched/handled any poisonous plants (i.e. Poison Ivy), please machine wash them. Use hot water and regular detergent. Hang the gloves out to dry.

In terms of care, the gloves are supposed to get worn out, but please notify us of any rips or tears.