

Campout Gear

Specifically, Tents, Sleeping Bags, and Mattress Pads

Overview

This document is meant to provide advice on gear for Cub Scout campouts.

Packing List

The general packing list is located here:

<https://www.scarsdalepack440.com/camping-101>

Please note that the weather in October can be quite variable. I want to make sure everyone is prepared in case it is cold and also in case it rains. Please bring mosquito repellent (I usually bring both the heavier "deep woods" repellent for my socks and ankles and the organic kid-friendly one for my neck and face). Please make sure that you are prepared if the weather is wet. And you, need to also prepare for the possibility of it being cold at night.

Please do NOT bring:

(a) Any food made with nuts

(b) Kids shouldn't have pocket-knives unless they have completed their "whittling chip" (which is the cub scout curriculum for handling pocket knives safely)

Tents

1. I suggest purchasing at REI. I've never bought a tent from anywhere else. You can purchase on their web site. REI has an "outlet" store that I usually purchase my tents from. If you go to REI's web site and look for "deals," you'll find lots of good tents.

2. Buy "one person larger than you intend to sleep". For example - if you are two people, buy a three-person tent. If you are three people, buy a four-person tent, etc.

3. These are the tents that I use, and sharing so you can see their shape, but I'd buy whatever is on sale at REI.

- For four or more people, I use the [REI Kingdom 6](#), which has been discontinued now, but the new, similar model is the [REI Wonderland 6](#). This is what I bring when I plan to share a tent with 4-5 people.

- For three-person tents, I use the [REI Base Camp 4](#). (again, it's important to buy a "4-person tent" if you plan to sleep 3 people.)

- For two person tents, really any of the [three-person tents sold by REI](#) are probably good, but I haven't tried them myself. (I'd buy one with a standard shape - like the Celestial 3 or the Zempire Trilogy... or just get the REI Basecamp 4) [This](#) is good, for example.

4. It's very important to bring a "ground cloth" for underneath your tent. These are critical for keeping your tent dry. Many tents have "tent footprints" that are custom made for your tent (and the easiest way to buy these), but when I camp, I usually just use a "[tarp](#)" from home depot or lowes or from Amazon ([link](#)) that is slightly larger than my tent base (you can "shop by size")

5. I also bring a tarp for the inside of my tent as well, because it protects the tent. I use rollable plastic sheets cut the size of my tent interior, cut to the size of the tent. Or you can buy one from Amazon [here](#).

6. We have 5-10 tents to lend out on a first-come-first-serve basis. And, as long as we don't use all of them, they'll be there in case anyone's tent breaks. So, if you want to go camping but don't have a tent, please email Heather and let her know you want to borrow one.

Mattress Pads

1. I recommend a foam mattress pad. I used to use the self-inflating mattress pads, and still do if I go backpacking, but the foam pads are just more comfortable.

2. I use [this one](#) and I get the "single" one for me and the kids one for my child, and it's very comfortable. It's bulky - so this isn't a good mattress pad for backpacking, and to be honest, five of these take up a lot of space in my car. **I highly recommend such a mattress pad** - it makes camping comfortable and it also provides a layer of insulation against the ground if the ground is cold.

Sleeping Bags

You should bring a sleeping bag rated down to 35 degrees, unless the weather beforehand clearly says that it will be warmer.

1. If you are buying a new sleeping bag, get a sleeping bag that is rated down to 25 degrees (so you can use it in the winter)

2. "Mummy vs Rectangular". I personally sleep in a "mummy" sleeping bag because it's warmer in the winter. I use the [Zephyr 25](#) when I camp. My wife thinks if you sleep on your side or like rolling around in your sleep, you'd enjoy a rectangular-shaped sleeping bag.

3. Synthetic vs. Down. If you're allergic to down, you should buy a synthetic sleeping bag.

4. I get my five year old a smaller sized sleeping bag (like [this one](#))

5. Don't tightly stuff sleeping bags when you store them. (you should get two stuff-sacks when you buy a sleeping bag - one to take camping and the other for storage. Make sure to save the one for storage)

Other Advice

1. Bring a camping pillow. When I was a kid, I put my shoes under my sleeping bag and used that as a pillow, but as an adult, I started using a real camping pillow and found it was much better.

2. Try to pitch your tent in a flat location.

3. If there is an incline, you want your head to be on the upper side of it. If your head is under your feet, you won't sleep as well.