

TÁRI'S EVENT PREPARATION & PACKING GUIDE

It's never too early to start preparing for your next foam fighting event! This guide is designed to help you plan, pack, and prepare for a great camping experience. As the name suggests, this is a guide—not a definitive list of campsite rules. Common sense should always take precedence. That said, this guide highlights many of the common event rules, expectations, and courtesies you're likely to encounter at most foam fighting events.

This guide draws on two decades of foam fighting experience and attending overnight events. It's intended as a collection of things to consider, especially if you're new to attending a foam fighting event. Think of it as a starting point rather than a checklist, because every fighter and every event is different. Ultimately, only you know what you need to stay comfortable, prepared, and ready to have a great time. Pack accordingly, use your best judgment, and most importantly, enjoy the experience!

Be well,

Master Seneschal Sir Tári Tinehtelë

Mittelmarch | Legion of the Dragoons | Knight of the Silver Order

PLANNING | BEFORE THE EVENT

- **Always read the event code of conduct and campsite rules in advance.** In addition, review state laws if you are traveling over state lines and do not pack any objects that are prohibited (some states restrict traveling with alcohol, firewood, etc.).
- **Determine in advance where you are camping, particularly for large events with a “land grab.”** If you are not staying in an established camp, ask a friend or group you know if you can camp with them. Alternatively, you can establish your own camp or camp in the singles/individuals camping area, which is a great way to meet new people, just be prepared for tighter camping quarters.
- **Determine your budget and meal plan in advance.** These are paired together because you cannot attend an event with just enough funds to pay your Troll (gate) fee—you have to eat and hydrate! Large events may have a camp store with a small selection of groceries or a food vendor. If you plan on buying groceries in town, arrive and set up your camp first then make a run to town (especially if you are tight on space in your vehicle). Any of these options are good, just plan it out in advance.
- **Be aware of any driving and parking requirements.** Many events have restrictions on parking RVs or campers, have specified parking areas or have an in-camp vehicle time limit. For example, driving may be restricted after dark so if you arrive at night, you may have to walk your belongings to your campsite. Check the campsite and event rules and plan your arrival accordingly.
- **If you are carpooling, it is courteous to offer some gas money to the driver.** You do not have to front the entire trip but anything helps, especially if you frequently catch a ride to town.
- **Check the weather in the days prior to the event and pack appropriately.** Be prepared for anything from rain to heat to cold. Waterproof your tent in advance and bring waterproof storage to prevent rain from soaking your belongings. Invest in garb that can be layered and bring a cloak to stay warm at night when temperatures drop.

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PARTICIPATING | AT THE EVENT

- **Be sure to have your payment, pre-registration and personal information ready when you arrive at Troll to make the process as smooth as possible.** Most events require a valid photo ID/driver's license but other information may be required. If you are under 18, identify your chaperone and bring a notarized waiver with you, depending on the event.
- **You will almost always be given an event token/band/tag at Troll. DO NOT LOSE IT** and keep it with you at all times. This is often required to show proof of payment at the event, access the fighting field and often necessary to enter and leave the campsite.
- **Get the most out of your event experience by paying attention to the schedule of events.** You may want to make yourself an itinerary as there are often many things you can do other than fighting such as classes, performances, parties, tournaments, visiting Merchant's Row and more.
- **Be mindful that you and others are here to enjoy a medieval/Tolkien-inspired experience.** Garb is usually required at all times outside of your campsite. Period drinking vessels are often required off the fighting field. Do not play modern or amplified music in camp or blast your radio while driving through the campsite.
- **Always be a generous and courteous camp-mate.** Regardless of where you camp or who you camp with, clean up after yourself daily! Trash and personal belongings should not be left around camp. Offer to volunteer within your camp by picking up trash, cooking a camp meal, chopping firewood or any other tasks your camp needs to get done. This will make your experience better and ensure you have friends to camp with next year.
- **All established campsites should have a physical border/wall with a main entrance.** Ask your camp master how you can contribute to the camp walls or help set them up once you arrive. Camp walls can be as simple as a rope or as elaborate as wooden walls and gates.
- **Get to know your neighbors by visiting other campsites.** When visiting another campsite, simply yell "Hail Camp" before entering another campsite and be sure to enter through the camp gate.
- **If you are attending more than one day, take advantage of the campsite showers.** Being outside in a non-ventilated tent, with fluctuating temperatures, plus a lot of sweat... Simply, be CLEAN.
- **Some events have a separate "field gate," a pre-check before taking the field.** This checkpoint is sometimes used to ensure all worn or carried equipment has been properly checked. Avoid any issues by having your event token with you, having pass stickers visible for all weapons, shields and armor, and arriving in passing garb.
- **Be sure to HYDRATE and EAT WELL throughout the event. Bring a case of water and be prepared to purchase more mid-event as needed.** Make sure your grocery list includes healthy snacks with protein; breakfast bars and pop tarts for a week straight will make you sick and you will not have any energy. If you notice someone overheating, help them get comfortable and summon a medic. Overall, take care of yourself and take care of others.

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- **If the event contains a Feast, use this opportunity to wear your best garb.** Try to arrive early with your own plates, utensils, napkins, and cups as they are not always provided.
- **Participate in nightlife responsibly.** Always ask what is in a drink before you drink it. Never travel to a new place or to a party alone. If you are underage and get caught drinking, you, your chaperone and possibly your camp master could get kicked out of the event. It's not worth it, don't do it.
- **Ensure someone you know/in your group knows how to contact your family in case of an emergency.** Some events have [volunteer] security that can assist you if you need help.
- **Give back to those running the event by volunteering.** It takes a large team of people to coordinate a large event they can never have enough help. Ask anyone in a leadership position at the event how you can help—it's a great way to meet new people!
- **When the event is over, be sure to clean up your campsite and leave it the way you found it.** Take trash to the central trash cans/dumpsters; any leftover trash, cigarettes, etc., have to be picked up by event staff. When you get home, take any wet items out of the car immediately, otherwise REST.

PACKING | THE BASICS

This packing overview assumes a multi-day camping event. As mentioned, this is meant to serve as a guide and not a complete list of everything you will personally need for the event. You will want to create your own, but the next several pages provide a list of possibilities!

- **Photo ID, Wallet, Cash, Pre-Registration** – In addition to needing an ID and cash for Troll, Merchant's Row is a great place to pick up last minute things like drinking mugs, garb and weapons. You will also want cash to help with camp expenses like firewood and food.
- **Entertainment** – Not every minute of your day needs to be filled with fighting—you are on vacation, after all. Be sure to pack something to do when you have downtime, such as your current book or craft project, your camera for taking photos or a deck of cards or a small board game. Many events have centralized tables and chairs (think Feast hall) to play group games or charge your cell phone if your campsite does not have electricity.
- **Mundane Clothes** – Keep a dry change of mundane clothes in the car for the trip home (bonus: put aside some money for a hot shower at a Pilot). Pack enough underwear and socks for twice the number of days you are attending (you may want to change clothes twice a day). Pack shorts and long pants to accommodate various weather as well as a swimsuit if you get the urge to go swimming (if offered at your campsite).
- **Shower Supplies** – Bring a fully stocked shower bag including towels and washcloths, shampoo and conditioner, body wash, lotion, razor and shaving cream, toothbrush and toothpaste, comb or brush, deodorant, contacts or glasses and cases, shower shoes.
- **Other Survival Supplies** – You will also want to have any medications you require, toilet paper, sunscreen, bug spray, baby wipes, hand sanitizer, and Q-tips. These seem like obvious things but are easily forgotten when packing garb and other gear.

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PACKING | GARB AND FIGHTING GEAR

- **Garb** – Remember to include both light and heavy fabrics for multiple types of weather (linen is breathable and long-lasting). You should include the following on your list: period footwear including combat boots or hemp flats, tunics or shirts, pants, belts and belt favors such as pouches or flags. You may also want to include a cloak, jewelry, or period carrying device such as a basket or satchel. There are many merchants that sell these items if you forget something or want to buy it new.
- **Weapons and Safety Equipment** – Unless you plan in advance to borrow weapons from someone for the week, you must supply your own weapons. The basics include your sword, shield, or you may also have a dagger, polearm, bow and arrows and more. You should also plan to bring supplies for weapon repair such as tape, spare foam and spray glue. You may be able to find weapon/ camping supplies in the camp store but for an inflated price so it's best to pack these items. Don't forget gloves, medical wrap/tape and anything else you need to make fighting more comfortable.
- **Armor** – Ensure that your armor meets the game requirements before you pack it (just because your local field allows your kit, it does not mean it will pass armor check at the event). Be sure to pack extra rivets or leather strips to repair your armor should it malfunction or need a repair mid-event.
- **Other Medieval Gear** – These items add to your Tolkien experience but are not necessary: candles and candlesticks, musical instruments like drums or flutes, costume daggers or steel weapons. Any live steel should be carried in a sheath (with a 'peace tie') and is never permitted on the battlefield.
- **Feast Gear** — Period feast gear is strongly encouraged for eating and drinking and period drinking vessels are usually required at night.

PACKING | CAMPING GEAR AND SUPPLIES

- **Shelter** – Unless you are sharing a tent with someone you will need your own place to sleep and the supplies necessary to be comfortable, including a tent with extra stakes, rain fly, camping pad, cot or air mattress, sleeping bag or blankets and pillows. Bring a large tarp to place underneath your tent to keep it dry and a hammer or mallet to make set-up easier.
- **Other Camping Supplies:** You may also want to bring plenty of extra rope (should your tent strings break or you want to hang a clothesline), a knife, camp chair, flashlight and batteries. Your camp master should supply your camp with a first aid kit, but bringing your own is always helpful.
- **Group Camping Supplies:** Coordinate with your camp master in advance to spread out the responsibility of larger or group items such as an axe or hatchet for chopping firewood, large cooler, water jug for camp water, a wagon for hauling weapons or groceries, folding table, torches and lanterns, Lysol and a broom. You can also coordinate on shared paper products like trash bags (in various sizes) paper towels, paper plates, plastic ware, etc.
- **Cooking** – Confirm with your camp master in advance if there is a camp meal plan or if you plan to purchase food throughout the week. If you plan on cooking for yourself or others, some items to consider include a propane camping grill or stove, cooking oil, seasonings, matches, foil, a campfire grill (metal grate you hang or place over the fire), cooking utensils including a spatula, tongs, can opener, cast iron pot or pan or hot dog skewers. You will also want to pack a dish pan, dish soap and sponges, etc. for cleaning up.

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PACKING | FOOD AND GROCERIES

Obviously you should pack and purchase groceries that fit your dietary needs and preferences, but here are some suggestions for easy-to-make snacks and meals that are light on your cooler (and your wallet):

- **Breakfast Staples** – They say breakfast is the most important meal of the day and they could not be more right. Whether it is a complete meal or a few small items throughout the morning, make sure you put food in your body before you go out to the fighting field. Pancakes are simple: pre-mix your batter or purchase fill-and-pour bottles from the grocery store. Eggs and bacon are nutritious and filling: purchase pre-cooked bacon if you are worried about cooking the bacon all the way through, and crack your eggs in advance and put them in a shaker bottle so you avoid the eggy mess in camp and you save space in your cooler. You can also hard boil eggs in advance or purchase them boiled from the store for a quick mid-day snack.
- **Campfire Meals** – Cooking over the fire can be intimidating but hot dogs, or soups and stews in a Dutch oven are easy meals that can feed an entire camp. A French loaf of bread, ham or turkey slices and cheese can also go a long way: roll up your favorites in a foil packet and leave it on the fire for about 20 minutes. You can also make grilled sandwiches in a sandwich press (grilled cheese, pizza sandwiches, the possibilities are endless).
- **Cooler Essentials** – A quick and nutritious meal from the cooler is perfect for lunch: peanut butter and jelly is high in protein and good fats and sugars (for additional nutritional value, add raw peanuts and sliced strawberries). Other options include cold cut meats and cheese, fruits like oranges, grapes, apples and bananas and hummus with carrots.
- **Healthy Snacks** – You will want to eat or drink something nutritious every couple of hours. Some great items to keep in your tent or take to the field include dried fruits, nuts and berries, granola, energy bars, jerky, crackers and (fully cooked) soup that can be eaten hot or cold.

PACKING CHECKLIST

This is the same packing information provided above, but in checklist format. You're welcome. :)

Basics

- ☐ Photo ID
- ☐ Wallet, Cash
- ☐ Pre-Registration Paperwork
- ☐ Entertainment (book, board games, deck of cards)
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Medications
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Bug spray

Toiletries

- ☐ Towels, washcloths,
- ☐ Shampoo, conditioner, body wash
- ☐ Lotion
- ☐ Razor, shaving cream
- ☐ Toothbrush, toothpaste

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- ☐ Comb, brush
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Contacts or glasses and cases
- ☐ Shower shoes
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Q-tips

Mundane Clothes

- ☐ Socks (x2 per day)
- ☐ Undergarments (x2 per day)
- ☐ Dry set for the car ride home
- ☐ Shorts
- ☐ Long pants
- ☐ Swimsuit

Garb, Armor

- ☐ Tunics or shirts
- ☐ Pants
- ☐ Period footwear, boots
- ☐ Belt, favors
- ☐ Cloak
- ☐ Jewelry
- ☐ Period bag
- ☐ Armor
- ☐ Armor repair kit

Weapons, Safety Equipment

- ☐ Sword(s)
- ☐ Dagger(s)
- ☐ Shield(s)
- ☐ Polearm
- ☐ Bow, arrows
- ☐ Repair kit: tape, spare foam, spray glue
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Medical wrap
- ☐ Tape

Optional Medieval Gear

- ☐ Candles, candlesticks
- ☐ Musical instruments
- ☐ Costume weapons
- ☐ Feast gear, drinking vessel

Camping Gear

- ☐ Tent, stakes
- ☐ Rain fly
- ☐ Tarps

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- ☐ Hammer, mallet
- ☐ Axe, hatchet
- ☐ Knife
- ☐ Extra rope
- ☐ Camp chair
- ☐ Cot, pad or air mattress
- ☐ Sleeping bag, blankets
- ☐ Pillows
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Wagon
- ☐ Table(s)
- ☐ Torches, lanterns
- ☐ Lysol
- ☐ Broom

Cooking Gear

- ☐ Cooler
- ☐ Water jug(s)
- ☐ Trash bags
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Paper plates
- ☐ Plastic ware
- ☐ Propane grill, stove, campfire grill
- ☐ Cooking oil
- ☐ Seasonings
- ☐ Matches
- ☐ Spatula
- ☐ Tongs
- ☐ Can opener
- ☐ Cast iron pot or pan
- ☐ Skewers
- ☐ Dish soap
- ☐ Sponges
- ☐ Dish pan

Grocery Shopping List

- ☐ Pancakes
- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Bacon
- ☐ Hot dogs
- ☐ Canned Soup
- ☐ Bread
- ☐ Deli meat
- ☐ Cheese
- ☐ Peanut butter
- ☐ Jelly
- ☐ Oranges

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- ☐ Grapes
- ☐ Apples
- ☐ Bananas
- ☐ Hummus
- ☐ Carrots
- ☐ Dried fruits, berries
- ☐ Nuts
- ☐ Granola
- ☐ Energy bars
- ☐ Beef jerky
- ☐ Crackers