

## RESOURCES FOR YOUR OUTDOOR PROGRAM

Scout leaders can draw on the outdoor knowledge and program support of many people. Begin with those already associated with your troop—parents and guardians, troop committee members, assistant Scoutmasters, members of the chartered organization, and registered merit badge counselors. Your neighborhood and Scouting district are also good sources—other troop leaders, district committee people, commissioners, council camping committee members, and the BSA's professional staff. You will encounter many of them at monthly roundtable meetings where you can share ideas not only for running an effective outdoor program, but also for any other aspect of troop leadership.

Training courses presented by your district and council are another ongoing feature of the Scouting calendar, and are open to Scoutmasters and their assistants, committee members, and other interested adults. Encourage your leaders to attend, and be sure to sign up yourself.

Many local councils maintain a *campmaster corps* of experienced Scouters who specialize in outdoor programs and techniques, and are trained to assist in short-term camping. You can arrange for their help when you plan your next overnight campout.

When it's time for a special troop outdoor program, such as skiing or canoeing, call on members of local groups that specialize in that activity. Almost every outdoor sport and hobby has its clubs and groups of experts who can help your troop plan and run a safe and exciting event. Rangers and land managers of public and private lands can also be strong allies in suggesting and supporting outdoor activities for young people. Libraries and bookstores can be great sources of publications about outdoor activities.

## TROOP AND PATROL HIKES

Hiking can be one of Scouting's most enjoyable adventures. A hike allows boys to be together in new surroundings, to function as a group, and to have a great time. While hiking they can gain the confidence and learn the skills that will prepare them for campouts and other longer-term activities.

Hikes are often very simple. Scouts can decide on a destination and then allow the adventure to develop while they are walking. If they keep their eyes and ears open, they are likely to see and hear much that will capture their interest.



Other hikes might be more structured in order to achieve certain goals. An orienteering hike, for example, allows Scouts to use maps and compasses to find their way. Nature hikes focus the Scouts' attention on wildlife and vegetation, and can be especially successful if the Scouts are accompanied by someone with a knowledge of local plants and animals. Another hike might lead Scouts who have been practicing first aid to a staged accident scene for an opportunity to test their new knowledge.

If possible, plan hike routes along quiet backroads with little traffic, or avoid roads altogether. When road walking can't be avoided, Scouts should hike single file on the left side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Keep night hiking along roads at a minimum, and continue in the dark only if Scouts are carrying flashlights and wearing light-colored clothing, reflective vests, or white cloths tied around their right legs for visibility. **Never** allow hitchhiking—it can be dangerous, and it spoils the spirit of a Scout adventure.

Emphasize safety on every Scout outing. Scouts should dress for the season and wear shoes or boots that are comfortable and sturdy. During chilly or wet weather everyone should be on guard against hypothermia.

(For more information on current BSA policies and procedures meant to ensure safe activities, see *Guide to Safe Scouting*.)





## PRINCIPLES OF LEAVE NO TRACE

### 1. PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

Proper trip planning and preparation helps hikers and campers accomplish trip goals safely and enjoyably while minimizing damage to natural and cultural resources. Campers who plan ahead can avoid unexpected situations, and minimize their impact by complying with area regulations such as observing limitations on group size.

### 2. TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

Damage to land occurs when visitors trample vegetation or communities of organisms beyond recovery. The resulting barren areas develop into undesirable trails, campsites, and soil erosion.

### 3. DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY (PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT)

This simple yet effective saying motivates backcountry visitors to take their trash home with them. It makes sense to carry out of the backcountry the extra materials taken there by your group or others. Minimize the need to pack out food scraps by carefully planning meals. Accept the challenge of packing out everything you bring.

### 4. LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

Allow others a sense of discovery: Leave rocks, plants, animals, archaeological artifacts, and other objects as you find them. It may be illegal to remove artifacts.

### 5. MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

Some people would not think of camping without a campfire. Yet the naturalness of many areas has been degraded by overuse of fires and increasing demand for firewood.

### 6. RESPECT WILDLIFE

Quick movements and loud noises are stressful to animals. Considerate campers observe wildlife from afar, give animals a wide berth, store food securely, and keep garbage and food scraps away from animals. Help keep wildlife wild.

### 7. BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

Thoughtful campers travel and camp in small groups, keep the noise down, select campsites away from other groups, always travel and camp quietly, wear clothing and use gear that blend with the environment, respect private property, and leave gates (open or closed) as found. Be considerate of other campers and respect their privacy.

(For more on Leave No Trace outdoor adventures, see the *Boy Scout Handbook* and the *Fieldbook*.)

## RESIDENT CAMPING

Outings lasting more than five nights and six days are considered by the Boy Scouts of America to be *resident camping* experiences. For most Scouts, their first camping adventure of this duration takes place at their local council's summer camp or at the summer camp of a neighboring council.

**Summer camp is a highlight of a Scout's experience. Scouts often spend more time acquiring knowledge and skills in one week of summer camp than they do in troop meetings throughout the year. In addition to summer camp, every troop should have ten days and nights of camping during the year, ideally an outing every month.**

### Local Council Resident Summer Camp

A local council summer camp offers troops terrific outdoor learning experiences and plenty of fun in a framework that maximizes opportunities while



### Tour Permits

Every troop activity off local council property requires a tour permit. Tour permits establish high standards of health and safety for troops while they are traveling. A tour permit is an assurance to the Scouts' parents and guardians, and to the local council, that their tour will be wisely planned, safe, and fun.

Fill out and file a local tour permit, one month in advance, whenever your troop plans an activity that is off local council property but within five hundred miles of your home base. The same permit is required if the troop plans to camp on another council's property, no matter how close or distant. (A copy of the local tour permit can be found in the "Forms" section of *Troop Program Resources*.)

A troop planning to travel more than five hundred miles from home or outside the continental United States must get a national tour permit from its local council.

minimizing effort. A council camp provides the setting (open country, campsites, room to roam), basic facilities (tents, waterfront, nature center, archery and rifle ranges), equipment (boats, canoes, recreational gear), and a trained staff (experts in aquatics, nature, woodcraft, field sports, first aid, and other Scouting skills).

Each troop is responsible for providing its own adult leaders for the duration of a summer camp adventure. A minimum of two qualified adult leaders must accompany the troop at all times. One of those leaders should be the Scoutmaster. Enjoying summer camp with the troop members is a superb chance for adult leaders and Scouts to continue building the part-

nership of trust and shared experience that carries the troop through the year.

If the Scoutmaster cannot attend camp even on a part-time basis, then a qualified troop committee member, assistant Scoutmaster, parent, or guardian should serve in the Scoutmaster's place. Make leadership assignments as far in advance as possible in order to avoid last-minute uncertainty.

Scouts attending summer camp will usually be expected to bring their own clothing, sleeping bags, and personal gear. The troop will also develop its own camp program—a plan for taking full advantage of the camp facilities, services, and staff. This plan allows troop members to schedule time to work on advancement requirements, to hike, to enjoy boating and swimming, and to engage in many other camp activities.

### Camp Planning

Getting ready for summer camp should begin at the annual troop program planning conference. The patrol leaders' council can organize program events throughout the year so that Scouts can master the camping and outdoor skills they will be using at summer camp.

Financing summer camp is another issue requiring long-term planning. The Scoutmaster and patrol leaders' council should work closely with the troop committee to devise the most appropriate way to



finance the summer camp experience for every boy who wants to go. In some cases boys pay their own way. Other troops conduct fund-raising campaigns to help send their patrols to camp.

Some councils offer special precamp training sessions for adult leaders and selected junior leaders. The sessions can give you a head start on summer plans and enable you to better prepare your troop for camp. "More training," goes an old saying, "means less straining."



### Promoting Summer Camp

Scoutmasters sometimes assume they don't need to promote an event that offers as much fun and adventure as does summer camp. But, with so many summer activities competing for the attention of young people, Scout camp might not be high on their lists unless it is energetically promoted.

Program events during the year can be developed with an eye toward providing Scouts with confidence that they will do well at summer camp and with enthusiasm so they will look forward to going. A special springtime meeting with parents and guardians can highlight the benefits of sending boys to camp, including Webelos Scouts who have recently joined the troop. Testimonials by Scouts who have been to camp, slide shows of a troop's previous camp experiences, and promotional materials provided by the council can help persuade boys and their families. The Order of the Arrow provides a camp promotional package and its members will often assist in camp promotion presentations.

**Proper promotion, planning, and budgeting can result in 100 percent summer camp attendance.**

### SHORT-TERM CAMPING

A campout is often a program feature "big event." As the members of the patrol leaders' council plan a campout, they must consider what equipment and food will be needed, and

how the Scouts will reach the campsite. Many troops will be able to provide boys with tents, stoves, and other group gear. Patrols can be assigned the duties of developing menus, purchasing food, and getting provisions ready to pack into camp. Food costs should be shared by all of the Scouts and leaders who take part. (For more on planning and carrying out successful camping trips, see the *Boy Scout Handbook*; *Fieldbook*; and *Troop Program Features, Volumes I, II, and III.*)

Short-term camping includes any Scout camping of less than five nights and six days. Convenient and appropriate campsites often can be found at a local council camp, a public park or forest, or on private land. Always secure the cooperation and permission of the BSA local council and land managers or property owners.

Here are some tips Scoutmasters and boy leaders can use to plan and run a good campout:

#### Purpose

Should a troop ever go camping just to have a good time? Of course. Every outing doesn't require a deep urgency about it. However, at any well-planned camp, Scouts will naturally pick up new skills and improve upon old ones. They might identify a new bird, make a new friend, cook a better meal, figure out how to follow a map more efficiently, fire up a camp stove, or make a more comfortable bed for the night. Campouts are rich with learning potential, and that itself is a very good purpose for any Scouting activity.

A troop campout might also have a theme based on its monthly program feature. Aquatics, environment, first aid, fishing, hiking, nature study, orienteering, cooking, tracking, wilderness survival, winter camping, and interpretive programs all lend themselves to overnights and weekend outings.

The patrol leaders' council might devise its own theme for a camping trip. If planned ahead with park officials, for example, patrols might camp near the location of a trail repair project or revegetation site. With the guidance of park personnel, Scouts could complete some of the work—a service project that gives something back to the land they are enjoying.

## Leadership

Every campout and short-term camp must have a qualified adult leader, at least 21 years of age, in charge and at least one more responsible adult participating—more adults if the group is large. A good ratio is one adult per patrol. If the Scoutmaster cannot attend, an assistant Scoutmaster or troop committee member may take the Scoutmaster's place. Of course the senior patrol leader will be on the job working with patrol leaders who, in turn, will be guiding their patrols.

Scouts may not depart for a camping trip unless a two-adult minimum of leadership is assured. (For more on two-deep leadership standards, see chapter 11, "Working with Boys.")

## The Campsite

How do you find a good campsite? Your local council might have a list of suggestions. Scouters attending district roundtable meetings often share their favorites. Your troop committee, parents and guardians, and chartered organization members might know of places. National, state, and local parks and forests often have camping areas, many of them set aside especially for groups the size of a Scout patrol or troop. Also, many Order of the Arrow lodges publish "where to go camping" booklets.

Contact the owners or managers of any potential campsite well in advance of the Scouts' arrival. If it will be the troop's first visit to a campground, try to make a personal visit to the person in charge of the area. He or she can be a great ally to you over the years and a tremendous source of information, support, and guidance. Get off on the right foot by doing all you can to build a good working relationship.

When you meet, explain what the Scouts are planning, the size of the troop or patrol, and the group's level of expertise in using Leave No Trace camping skills. Explore the opportunities available in that particular forest, park, or private land. Pay close attention to any regulations the land manager might explain. To protect natural resources or to enhance the outdoor experience of other people, a land management agency or property owner might limit group size, prohibit the use of campfires, or impose other guidelines on activities.



Scouts and their leaders must understand all regulations and then obey them to the letter. Scouts are guests on public and private lands. By proving they can act responsibly, they will ensure that they and future Scouts will have similar opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

**Scouts moving under their own power with their packs on their backs are getting into the spirit of a campout long before they reach the place where they'll pitch their tents. Whenever possible, plan to hike at least part of the way to a campsite.**

## Making Camp

An exciting part of camping out is making the camp itself. Pitching tents, setting up dining flies, establishing a kitchen area, and preparing ground beds are all tasks that Scouts thrive on doing. Guide them where your input will be helpful, help them with any issues of safety and Leave No Trace camping methods, but allow them plenty of leeway to make the camp their own. (For guidelines on making camp, see the *Boy Scout Handbook* and *Fieldbook*.)

## Program

Help your patrol leaders' council develop Scouting activities the outdoors seems made for—nature, advancement skills, exploration, tracking and compass challenges, environmental awareness, cooking specialties, star hikes, and conservation Good Turns. Stress safety and use the patrol system all the way.

Scouts planning a campout can consider the opportunities presented by the area they will visit. Is there a lake or stream for boating, fishing, or swimming? Is there a "hike within a hike" possibility, such as an abandoned railroad track leading to a park or farm? Are there deep woods and animal trails for wildlife observation? Is there a hill to climb, a meadow for a wide game, or a "lost" trail to a "secret" campfire site? Latch onto these exciting opportunities whenever you can. They can turn a conventional overnight into an unforgettable experience.



### Rainy-Day Activities

The first Scoutmaster to see the need for rainy-day activities was the Scoutmaster who spent a rainy day without any activities to occupy a damp and restless troop. Be prepared when that rainy day comes, because it will.

A troop should be ready for the weather it expects to encounter. That might mean setting up tarps or large group tents. The expectation of wet weather can also affect menus.

Scouts might want more in the way of hot drinks and nutritious snacks to get them through stormy days and nights.

Scouting literature such as the *Boy Scout Handbook*; *Junior Leader Handbook*; *Fieldbook*; and *Troop Program Features, Volumes I, II, and III* overflow with ideas for games, skits, skills, contests, and problem solving that can be adapted for use in tents or under a tarp. Ask a junior leader to pull together some of

**Over time, troop leaders are often pleasantly surprised to discover that Scouts remember the misadventures of difficult campouts every bit as fondly as they remember the outings that went smoothly.**

the best of these ahead of time for use when the rain begins. Because it will.

### Leadership Help

Draw on other people to enhance Scout campouts. Experienced Scouters from other troops might be willing to visit your campsite and share some of their expertise. Park and forest rangers are often eager to get acquainted with

groups using public lands to help build healthy working relationships. Sometimes a council provides outdoor skills education and assistance through the campmaster corps—the volunteer group of experts we mentioned earlier.



### WHAT'S FOR SUPPER?

Scouts in the outdoors need to feed themselves at least three times a day. That's a powerful incentive for them to learn efficient ways of planning menus, shopping for food, packing and storing provisions, cooking outdoors, and cleaning up. Here are some considerations that will help your Scouts keep themselves well fed and enjoy the process of making it happen:

#### Patrol Cooking

Scouts usually cook and eat by patrols. Every Scout shares in the duties—and learns. Members of the new-Scout patrol might benefit from some friendly coaching by the senior patrol leader, troop guide, and the assistant Scoutmaster assigned to them.

#### Planning Menus

Good meals begin with good menus that include ingredients from the major food groups and are reasonable in cost, easy to prepare, and popular with Scouts. The *Boy Scout Handbook* contains menu-planning tips, recipes for camp meals, an overview of cooking methods, and a chart to help Scouts estimate the serving-size quantities they will need.

Just as each patrol cooks together, so should each patrol plan its menu, estimate the cost, and collect contributions from its members to cover the expense. The senior patrol leader, troop instructors, and adult leaders may help patrols review their menus and price lists.

Important considerations during menu planning include how the provisions will be transported to camp and how trash and uneaten food will be carried



out for proper disposal. Scouts should figure ingredient amounts carefully so that they will not have to deal with many leftovers. If the campsite will be near a road and the weight of packs is not an issue, the menu can rely more on fresh foods and canned goods. A patrol might even want to bring extra pots and pans to create special feasts.

The farther Scouts will hike, though, the more critical it is that their loads be minimized by relying on grains, pasta, dried and dehydrated ingredients, and other foods that are lighter in weight. Removing foods from the original store packaging and stowing them instead in plastic bags can further reduce weight and save space. This will also prevent cardboard and other packing materials from getting into the backcountry.

### Shopping for Food

For many Scouts, shopping for food will be a new experience. Some might find it confusing, others exhilarating. However, unless menus have been planned with due regard to cost, patrols might run out of money before they run out of shopping list. That can be a powerful learning opportunity, but a more rewarding experience would be planning well in the first place.

### Learning to Cook

Just as parents and guardians can be sources of help for Scouts organizing menus and shopping for food, they can also encourage boys to learn some of the cooking fundamentals in the family kitchen. Scouts who help out with meal preparations at home can become familiar with cooking techniques that translate readily to the campsite.

New-Scout patrol members might want to include a cooked noon meal during a day hike. Cooking a couple of simple dishes over a backpacking stove can give them—perhaps for the first time ever—a chance to fix a meal for themselves outdoors. The experience can greatly increase their confidence and help get them ready to prepare meals during overnight camping trips.

### Preparing Meals in Camp

By the time a patrol arrives at a campsite, the planning that has been done should ensure that the Scouts are carrying the food and cooking gear needed for tasty, nutritious meals that will power them through their time away from home. Now just one challenge remains—who will do it all? Who will cook? Who will fuel and light the stoves, or gather kindling and build

a fire? Who will haul water for cooking and washing? Who will clean up afterward? And who will take over those jobs for the next meal, and the meal after that?

One solution is for a patrol to work out a duty roster that clearly spells out who does what at each meal. The following chart is for a

seven-day outing such as at summer camp. For shorter trips, several Scouts can share each duty, rotating through the chart over a number of adventures rather than just one.

**One of the great lessons of outdoor life is that of simplicity.**

**Sample Duty Roster**

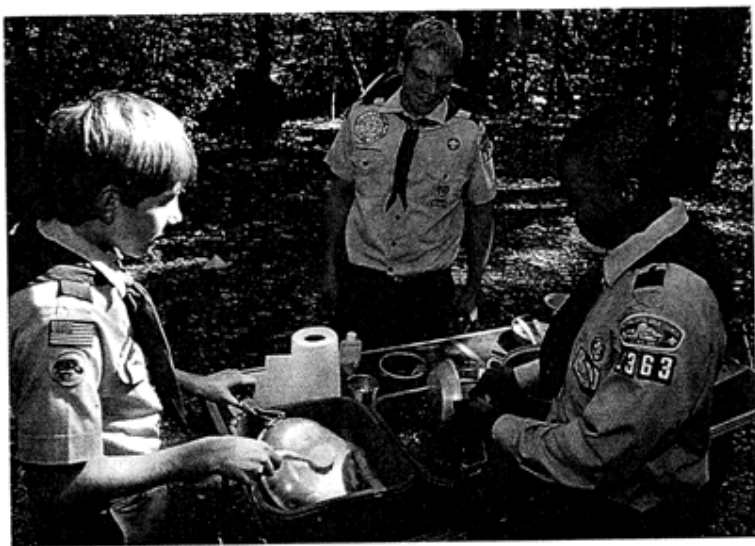
	Stoves	Water	Cooking	Cleanup
Friday	Leo	Pham	Bob	Angelo
Saturday	Julio	Leo	Pham	Bob
Sunday	Frank	Julio	Leo	Pham
Monday	George	Frank	Julio	Leo
Tuesday	Angelo	George	Frank	Julio
Wednesday	Bob	Angelo	George	Frank
Thursday	Pham	Bob	Angelo	George

### Eating Camp Meals

The senior patrol leader and other older Scouts can set the tone for how Scouts should act at mealtime. Have a pot of water and bar of soap at the edge of camp so each Scout can wash his hands before cooking or eating. The patrol leader can then ask his Scouts to get their plates and utensils and gather for a moment to give thanks for the meal.

Cooks should instruct patrol members on how the meal will be served. Each Scout might be allotted certain amounts—two slices of cheese, for example, with seconds after everyone has had their first share. It's usually a good idea for the cooks to serve out fair portions of soups, pasta, stews, and other large-pot dishes.

Many patrols make a practice of inviting a Scout leader to join them for a meal. In addition to being a gracious gesture, it encourages patrols to do their best in preparing the meal and provides a pleasant way for Scouts and troop leaders to more closely share the outdoor adventure.



### Cleaning Up

A patrol planning a campout should give careful consideration to how it will clean up after meals. If the outing will take place at a camp with trash containers and facilities for washing up, patrol members will find the job to be about the same as at home. However, if the Scouts are backpacking into camp, they must be prepared to deal with all of their litter and garbage in ways that leave no sign the Scouts were ever there. Leave No Trace camping involves some commonsense skills that are easy to master and should become a natural part of every Scout's outdoor habits.

Scouts in charge of cleanup can accelerate the process by heating a pot or two of water on the stove or campfire while the patrol is eating. When the meal ends, the Scouts can set out one pot of hot water containing biodegradable soap, a second pot of hot rinse water containing a few drops of a sanitizing agent such as bleach, and a pot of cold water for a final rinse. If each Scout washes his own dishes and a pot or a cooking utensil, the work will be done quickly and no one will have to spend a long time at it.

Troop members should be willing to carry out of the backcountry everything they carry into it. Because they will have eaten most of their food, their packs will be much lighter even as they carry every empty can, container, box, and bag. It's that simple.

Lightweight camp stoves allow patrols to cook in areas where open fires are not permitted. The BSA approves of Scouts using liquid fuel and compressed gas stoves under the supervision of knowledgeable adults. In addition to protecting the land, stoves make cooking and cleanup fast and efficient.

(For more on camp cleanup, see the *Boy Scout Handbook* and *Fieldbook*.)

### SLEEPING IN CAMP

While the outdoor leadership of patrols rests on the shoulders of junior leaders, you as Scoutmaster will want to follow up on the Scouts' preparation of their tents and ground beds to make sure that they will be comfortable, warm, and dry. Few situations discourage Scouts more than struggling through the night in a rain-soaked sleeping bag or in a tent pitched on sharp roots and rocks. Encourage Scouts to change into long underwear, sweat suits, or any other weather-appropriate sleepwear before going to bed. The clothing they wore during the day might have become damp, and that can lead to an uncomfortable or chilly night.

At the patrol leaders' council meeting preceding a campout, you might want to come to an agreement on the group's expectations for bedtime and wake-up time to ensure that the Scouts get enough rest but still have enough time to achieve all they want to do. The patrol leaders might decide, for example, that they will ask Scouts to be in their sleeping bags by 10:00 P.M. and quiet by 10:30. Junior leaders and other older Scouts can then set an example for the younger Scouts to follow.

As Scouts settle into their tents, make a bed check before you retire and be sure every Scout and leader is accounted for. There must always be at least two qualified adult leaders in camp.

### BREAKING CAMP

Before departing a campsite, each patrol leader should lead his Scouts in cleaning up their area and making a thorough sweep through the camp. Their goal is to leave the site with no sign that the patrol had ever been there. In many troops, the patrol cannot depart until the senior patrol leader inspects the campsite and approves the Scouts' efforts to leave it better than they found it.

When everyone is ready to go, call them together in a circle of friendship and give thanks for the good time you had together and for the good times to come.