

## **CAMPING CHECKLIST**

### **PACKING LIST**

- The items listed below are good resources to include when packing for a camping trip. While you don't want to carry too many items with you, it's important to be well prepared. Consider some of the objects below before heading out on your next trip!
- Map of area in which you will be camping
- Compass
- Flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs
- Extra food
- Extra clothing, including raingear
- First-aid kit
- Sunglasses and sunscreen
- Pocketknife
- Waterproof matches
- Adequate supply of clean drinking water or a water purifier
- Insect repellent, including DEET for ticks
- Waterproof and lightweight tent
- Ground insulation for sleeping
- Sleeping bag
- Small cooking kit, a cup, and utensils
- Stove for cooking

### **FOOD AND WATER**

- Eat plenty of carbohydrates to help keep your body warm.
- Drink lots of water, even though you may not feel thirsty.
- Bring along an insulated thermos of hot drinks or soup.
- Insulate your water bottles and keep them from freezing by inserting them into a sock during the night.

### **DRESS**

- Wear layers of breathable clothing. Avoid cotton as it will stay wet longer. Wool and synthetic fibers are recommended.
- If rain is likely, make sure to wear a waterproof layer on top of your other clothing.
- Replace socks and shoes if they get wet.
- Use chemical heat packs to keep your feet and hands warm.

### **SHELTER AND SLEEPING**

- Create a barrier between your sleeping bag or blankets and the ground. This barrier will help keep you warm and dry when camping in cool weather.
- Select a tent site sheltered from the wind.
- If there's snow in your camp site, pack it down before setting up your tent. This will provide for a more comfortable sleeping spot.
- Put a bottle of warm water or use a hot-water bottle in the foot of your sleeping bag to help keep your feet warm.
- Vent your tent as much as possible at night to reduce condensation on the inside.
- Exercise before getting into bed to increase your body temperature, but not enough to start sweating.
- Sleep with a hat on to reduce your loss of body heat.
- Before dressing in the morning, warm clothes up by putting them in your sleeping bag.

### **TIPS FOR CAMPING WITH KIDS**

Camping with kids is great family fun. We are all kids at heart when it's time to go camping, but when your camping trip includes young children some extra planning and precautions will make the trip more fun and memorable. Here are some tips to help you start thinking ahead about camping with children.

- Teach young children to stay within eyesight, and older children within earshot.
- Teach children to stay where they are if they discover they are lost. Instruct them to find a nearby tree and stay with it until they are found.
- Children over the age of four can carry a simple survival kit, or at least a whistle around their neck to call for help when lost. The standard distress signal is three blows to indicate "I'm lost" or "I need help."
- Sort and pack each day of your children's clothes within individual small plastic grocery bags in his/her suitcase. This way your child can grab a bag in the morning and have a full set of clothes for the day, and at night he/she can stuff the dirty ones back in the bag thus not mixing up the rest of the suitcase.
- Children get cold faster than adults. The key to comfortable camping with kids is to dress them in several layers, which can be peeled off as they get warm or added on as they cool off.
- Provide each child with a flashlight. To prevent any arguments, make sure each one has their own.
- Children love to play with the flashlights, and having one also makes them more at ease after dark.
- Flashlights are also handy when making trips to the restroom, for making shadow puppets on tent walls, and for reading before bed.
- Bring along a game you all like to play at home. Playing it outdoors with a lantern or flashlights will add to the fun.

- Teach your kids to treat the outdoors kindly. Make sure all waste is disposed of properly when camping or hiking along the trails.
- Camping with children is more fun when you bring a playmate along. Two or more children will entertain themselves for longer periods than will a single child.

### **CAMPFIRE TIPS**

- Campfires are an enjoyable part of camping. While they are a favorite part of being outdoors, they may not always be allowed at your campsite. Be sure to check with the campground manager or the local forest service about possible restrictions due to forest fire hazards. Here are some tips to get the most out of your campfire experience.
- Keep fire small.
- Softwoods, like pine, fir, and cedar, are best for starting a fire.
- Have water available to extinguish the fire properly.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Maintain a debris-free area around the fire, so sparks cannot ignite vegetation and spread the fire.
- Make sure ashes are cold when you leave the fire.
- Build fires only in fire rings, stoves or fireplaces.
- Use only dead wood lying on the ground. Do not cut live trees, or branches from trees near the campsite.
- Start the fire by building a small teepee of dry sticks and igniting it with a match. As the fire gets started, add larger pieces of wood.
- Extinguish all fires by pouring water on them, stirring the ashes and pouring more water.
- Leave your fire ring clean for the next campers.

### **FAMILY TENT TIPS**

- Your family camping tent will be your house and home. The tent you choose will probably be the most important piece of gear you buy. A good tent, taken care of properly, will last a lifetime. A good tent will let you sleep soundly at night without needing to worry about rain, wind, bugs or other creatures of the night. Select the best tent you can afford, set it up properly, take care of it, and then just enjoy your trip. Here are some tips to help you get off to a good start.
- Set up a new tent at home before your trip. This lets you check its condition, and learn how to set it up without the pressure of darkness or rain at camp.
- The seams on all nylon tents must be sealed before using a new tent, and periodically thereafter. Seam sealer is sold in applicator bottles, which you rub along the inside of all waterproof seams.
- Avoid setting up camp next to stagnant water, which is home to biting insects.

- Don't set up the tent on a sandbar or in a dry wash. The water will probably rise if it rains. Dry washes can flash flood due to a rain storm many miles away.
- Don't set up the tent in a low spot or depression. Rainwater will collect under the tent and soak through into your sleeping bag.
- During bug season, you might want to take a gazebo. This is essentially a rain tarp with mosquito netting on all sides, to provide shelter from bugs, rain and the sun.
- Put a plastic tarp on the ground under the tent. It should match the "footprint" of the tent so that it doesn't gather rainwater. This groundsheet protects the floor of your tent from stones, sticks, and general wear and tear.
- You can get special stake-driving mallets, or use a plain old household hammer, to pound tents stakes into the ground.
- Don't use your axe for driving stakes. This can damage the axe head, and possible cause it to fly off.
- Get the sturdiest aluminum tent stakes possible. Most campgrounds build sites with gravel, and this hard ground will bend or break most lightweight and plastic stakes.
- The rainfly is a special tarp that is spread over the top of the tent to make it waterproof. Most tents come with a matching rainfly included. The rainfly should allow the tent windows to remain open for ventilation while protecting the seams from potential leaks.
- Use a stake puller to help pull tent stakes out of the ground, or just loop a short rope under the stake's hook and pull on the rope to pull up on the stake.
- Keep a whiskbroom in the tent for sweeping out dirt and leaves.
- Use an old towel or small piece of carpet as a door mat for wiping off feet before entering the tent.