

# PACKING A COOLER

Keeping perishables cold is an important safety rule to follow

When it's just the two of you camping, a medium-sized, soft-sided cooler is usually enough. But some couples tend toward minimalism.

Instead of buying bags of ice, freeze foods and water bottles to keep food cold. Use up fresh food in the first few days, then use up dry and canned foods for the last few days.

But when you go camping with friends or family members,

you will need to take more and to cook more complicated meals. That's when it's great to haul out the big hard-sided cooler on wheels.

It's important to have a good cooler with good insulation, a drain plug, and one or two bins for smaller items you don't want soaking in melted ice.

You may want a second, smaller cooler to store cold drinks

## Watertight Containers



KNACK CAR CAMPING FOR EVERYONE



- Keep thawing meat juices from contaminating other food.
- Keeping food in its original container will help keep it watertight.
- Put raw meat and vegetables in watertight containers or zip-top bags.
- Reserve space for a zip-top bag of things that melt in hot weather: lipstick, crayons, and chocolate.

or to keep in the back seat of the car. A small soft-sided cooler is nice for packing a lunch as well.

If you have perishables like meat, mayonnaise, and dairy, put some thought into packing and restocking the cooler with ice to make them last and to prevent anyone from getting sick.

*A cooler like this one, with vertical sides, means less wasted space.*

### Camp Fridge



- Be sure the cooler has good insulation, a drain plug, and one or two trays.
- Save your back by getting a cooler on wheels with a long handle.
- Be sure the lid closes snugly. Some models have a locking lid to keep critters or little hands out.
- Discourage browsing in the cooler by having a separate smaller cooler for cold drinks. Freeze these ahead to make them last even longer on hot days.

### ZOOM

To prolong the life of your ice: Freeze food and drinks if possible. Put food in first, then cover with ice. Keep the cooler out of the sun, and keep it covered with a wet towel. Avoid frequent opening, and close the lid tight. Don't drain all the cold water. Keep meats/perishables directly on ice.

### Refilling Ice



- Try to replenish ice daily and drain water.
- If you can't replenish ice daily, do not drain. The cold water will still help insulate.
- Pour food on top of ice.
- Consider a block of ice in the bottom of the cooler. It lasts longer than cubes.