



BOY SCOUT TROOP 55 GREAT FALLS, VA



Camping Checklist – Cold Weather Car Camping

NOTE:

- All clothing items should be made of warm synthetic fabric and/or wool.
- If you are a Patrol Leader you should review these requirements with your patrol and make sure all new scouts are aware of the cold weather camping gear requirements.
- Typically a car camping outing has no specific gear restrictions so BRING EXTRA, especially during cold weather.

COLD WEATHER CLOTHING

- Long-sleeved shirt (ie under armor)
- Long scout pants
- Long underwear (shirt and pants)
- Hat/Cap to go over ears, ski mask or balaclava
- Warm Gloves
- Warm jacket
- Fleece jacket, outer shell or pullover
- Rain gear (jacket & pants)
- Class-B scout shirts
- Scout socks (2-3 pairs)
- Undergarments

PERSONAL GEAR & CAMPING ESSENTIALS

- Nalgene / Water bottle
- Hiking boots
- Mess kit (bowl, plate, cup, utensils, etc.)
- Toiletry kit (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.)
- Flashlight / head-lamp
- Hand towel / Shower towel
- Money for food during car ride

TENT & SLEEPING

- Tent, ground cloth, rain-fly
- Cold-weather rated sleeping bag

Note: If your sleeping bag is not rated for 20 degrees or below, long underwear and a closed-cell pad are a must!

- Air mattress or sleeping pad

COLD WEATHER GEAR & CAMPING EXTRAS

- Cold weather sleeping bag insert (fleece, wool or synthetic)
- Extra shirts, pants, jackets, layers, etc.
- 180 ear covers
- Hand / Foot warmer packs
- Additional warm undergarments
- Long shirts / pants
- Fleece or wool blanket
- Extra Gloves
- Ski Pants / Jacket
- Extra fleece jacket, outer shell or pullover
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Watch
- Camera
- Notebook, pen and pencil
- Extra flashlight / headlamp and batteries
- Pocketknife or multi-tool (Totin' Chip required)
- Insect repellent
- Daypack (may be required on a hiking outing)
- Extra Nalgenes/water bottles
- Pillow
- Camp shoes or tennis shoes
- Neckerchief
- Snacks
- Sunscreen / sun protection
- Sunglasses
- Scout hat with brim
- Scout handbook
- Compass
- Rope to practice knots

Cold Weather Camping Tips & Tricks

- *If you are car camping, always bring extra gear, especially clothing.*
- If your clothes are clean and dry, they will breathe better and you'll stay warmer. If you overheat, your clothes will be wet and you will easily chill.
- Layering your clothes will keep you clean, warm and dry and will prevent overheating. If you start to feel warm, simply remove a layer of clothing. If you start to feel cold, add another layer of clothing.
- An example of proper layering starting from the layer closest to your skin on the upper half of your body would be thermal top, t-shirt, shirt, sweater and jacket. For your head, a scarf and a ski hat.
- Make sure that you have a good knowledge of the signs of frostbite and hypothermia. You should be able to recognize it in others and in yourself. Tell someone right away if you or another scout is showing signs of cold-related problems.
- Stay hydrated. It's easy to get dehydrated in the winter. Eat and drink plenty of carbs.
- Keep out of the wind if you can. A rain fly for a tent can be pitched to serve as a wind break. The wind chill factor can often be considerable and can result in effective temperatures being much lower than nominal.
- Always eat hot meals (breakfast, lunch, & dinner.) Don't get too fancy with the meals - it's hard to chop onions & carrots at -10°F with gloves on. Prep all meals at home in the warmth of the kitchen. Slow burning carb dinners are best (spaghetti, noodles, potatoes, rice, etc.) These will provide heat while sleeping.
- COTTON KILLS! Do not bring cotton.
- Remember the 3 W's of layering - Wicking inside layer, Warmth middle layer(s) and Wind/Water outer layer. Wicking should be a polypropylene material as long underwear and also sock liner. Warmth layer(s) should be fleece or wool. The Wind/Water layer should be Gore-Tex or at least 60/40 nylon.
- Bring extra hand covering - mittens are warmer than gloves.
- Bring 2 changes of socks per day.
- Everyone must be dry by sundown. No wet (sweaty) bodies or wet inner clothing.
- Use plastic grocery bags or bread bags over socks. This keeps your boots dry and you can easily change those wet socks.
- Keep your hands and feet warm. Your body will always protect the core, so if your hands and feet are warm, your core will also likely be warm. If your hands or feet are cold, put on more layers, and put on a hat!
- Dress right while sleeping. Change into clean, dry clothes before bed. Your body makes moisture and your clothes hold it in - by changing into dry clothes you will stay warmer and it will help keep the inside of your sleeping bag dry. Wearing wool socks and long underwear (tops and bottoms) in the sleeping bag is OK.
- Put on tomorrow's t-shirt and underwear at bedtime. That way you won't be starting with everything cold next to your skin in the morning.
- Wear a stocking cap to bed, even if you have a mummy bag.
- Put tomorrow's clothes in your bag with you. This is especially important if you're small of stature. It can be pretty hard to warm up a big bag with a little body, the clothes cut down on that work.
- Put a couple of long-lasting hand warmers into your boots after you take them off. Your boots will dry out during the night.
- Fill a couple of Nalgene water bottles with warm water and sleep with one between your legs (warms the femoral artery) and with one at your feet. Or use toe/hand warmers. Toss them into your sleeping bag before you get in. Some of the toe/hand warmers will last 8 hours.
- Eat a high-energy snack before bed, then brush your teeth. The extra fuel will help your body stay warm. Take a Snickers bar to bed and eat it if you wake up chilly in the night.
- Use a sleeping bag that is appropriate for the conditions. Two +20°F sleeping bags, one inside the other will work to lower the rating of both bags.
- Use a bivy sack to wrap around your sleeping bag. You can make a cheap version of this by getting an inexpensive fleece sleeping bag. It isn't much more than a blanket with a zipper but it helps lower the rating by as much as 10 degrees.
- Use a sleeping bag liner. There are silk and fleece liners that go inside the sleeping bag. They will lower your sleeping bag's rating by up to 10 degrees. Or buy an inexpensive fleece throw or blanket and wrap yourself in it inside the sleeping bag.
- Most cold weather bags are designed to trap heat. The proper way to do this is to pull the drawstrings until the sleeping bag is around your face, not around your neck. If the bag also has a draft harness make sure to use it above the shoulders and it snugs up to your neck to keep cold air from coming in and warm air from going out.
- Don't burrow in - keep your mouth and nose outside the bag. Moisture from your breath collecting in your bag is a quick way to get real cold. Keep the inside of the bag dry.
- Put a trash bag over the bottom half of your sleeping bag to help hold in the heat. A zipped up coat pulled over the foot of a sleeping bag makes an extra layer of insulation.
- No liquids after 8pm. Drain your bladder before you go to bed. Having to go in the middle of the night when it is 5 degrees out chills your entire body. Drink all day, but stop two hours before bed.

HOW TO SLEEP WARM

1. GO TO BED WARM

Do a few jumping jacks, push ups – just enough to warm yourself up but before you start sweating. If you get in a sleeping bag when you are cold you'll likely stay cold.

2. FUEL UP

If it's going to be a very cold night consider a pre-bedtime snack that will keep the furnace burning. Slow burning fatty snacks are better than refined sugars or caffeine.



3. WATER

You need to be well hydrated to stay warm.



How much water to drink within the hour or two before you go to sleep is determined by how fast you process it. If you need to get up early drinking a lot of water before bedding down will serve as a natural alarm clock – it can be tricky to get the timing right. If nature calls in the middle of the night get up and go! Holding it in makes you colder.

4. CLOTHING

Change as much of your clothing as possible. The clothes you wore all day will be a bit damp and cold. If you wear them to bed you'll have to warm your cold damp clothes up before you get warm.



5. HOT WATER BOTTLES

Consider filling your water bottles with hot water, wrapping them with some spare clothing and warming up your sleeping bag before you get in it.

6. WEAR A HAT

We lose heat from our heads. It's not an old wife's tale; wear a hat to keep your feet warm.



7. KEEP YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH OUTSIDE

Don't put your nose and mouth into your sleeping bag. Moisture from breathing will make the bag and your clothing damp. A well-designed mummy style sleeping bag will allow you to close the bag so only your nose and mouth are exposed.

8. KEEP OFF THE GROUND

Sleeping warm means insulating your self from the ground. A good insulating pad is important.

9. SLEEPING BAG SOCKS

If you get cold feet try keeping a dedicated pair of thick, loose fleece or wool socks worn only in the sleeping bag.



10. SHAKE UP YOUR BAG

Whatever type of insulation is in your sleeping bag it will be compressed from packing. Do a good job of shaking and re-distributing the insulation before you get in the bag.

