



HINTS & TIPS FOR FIRST TIME CAMPERS

- 1) All personal kit should be marked with the owners name. Breaking camp can often be a confusing time. Please return anyone else's kit that has found its way into your bag at the end.
- 2) Camp organisers accept no responsibility for personal equipment, clothing and effects – bring old to camp do not risk spoiling your nice new trainers. Scout association insurance does not cover loss of personal effects while on camp.
- 3) Read the kit list and make sure you pack your own gear so that you will know which clothes are yours and where they are in your bag. If you have any questions ask a leader before camp it's too late once we arrive on site.
- 4) Take bin bags, they use up very little room and are great for separating clean and dirty clothes.
- 5) Remember if you keep food or sweets in the tent Squirrels will find it. They will eat through tents – rucksacks-sleeping bags and evening training shoes to get to food. Eat it or if you really need to save it then ask a leader to store it for you (most will be happy to help for the donation of a small sweet or two)
- 6) Help others to look after their equipment and they will help you with yours.
- 7) Don't ever walk on a tent while it's on the ground. The weight of your body forces dirt into the fabric making tiny holes that will leak and shorten the life of the tent.
- 8) When you put up a tent, put all the small bags (pole bag, peg bag etc) and any spare items (pegs, mallet) inside the biggest bag. It's easy to lose a small bag or peg but difficult to lose a big bag with stuff in it.
- 9) If any tents pegs come out, re=peg them straight away. It's much easier in daylight than in the dark and cold. If we are camping in the smaller "lightweight" nylon tents make sure you undo both zips fully before getting in and out, then you won't damage the tent and upset the leaders!
- 10) Do not touch the walls of a canvas tent when it's raining. When it rains the fabric of a patrol tent will swell up and fill the tiny holes between threads. If you touch the canvas it disturbs the pattern and water will drip through getting you and your kit wet.
- 11) Walk around the guy ropes on the tent do not climb over them or run around them. If you trip over them not only will it damage the tent (the one you have to sleep in we do not take spares) but more than likely you will seriously hurt yourself and end up either going home early or in hospital.
- 12) When you go to bed make sure you tidy all your belongings first. If you leave things outside they WILL get wet even in summer. If you leave them laying around the tent they will get lost.
- 13) On some camps you are allowed to stay up late around the camp site. This is not compulsory, often scouts prefer to go to bed early (before they are sent). Often you will note it is the older ones that choose to go to bed first as they know how much work and activities they will be doing the next day.
- 14) Most Campsites have a quiet time between 10.30pm and 8am you must keep noise to a minimum during this period.
- 15) Don't go to bed in dirty clothes even when it is cold. You will wake up feeling sticky, damp and cold. During the day your cloths absorb your sweat but you are busy moving around and they dry off so you do not notice. At night all the trapped sweat will cling to your body and lower your temperature. Its always best to keep a change of clothes for sleeping in, this keeps you warm and dry and of course keeps your sleeping bag clean.
- 16) Go to the loo before you go to bed. It saves getting up in the middle of the night and waking everyone else up.
- 17) If you have to get up in the night remember it will be a lot colder outside you tent/Sleeping bag so keep a jumper nearby and put it on.
- 18) If you feet are wet at night dry them before going to bed. They do not get much air in the bottom of your sleeping bag!
- 19) Tents are not sound proof nor are the walls as thick as your bedroom. Leaders can hear you talking/whispering/ laughing from quite a long way away.
- 20) Its fun to have your torch on half the night in tents, but you'll use up the batteries on the first night and attract all the insects into your tent and the bites will hurt.

- 21) If it's raining when you wake up in the morning keep quiet and don't wake anyone else if possible go back to sleep. If we want you up we will come and tell you otherwise take advantage of the chance to lie in and stay dry. If you forget and talk loudly waking the leaders up then we will get you up regardless of the weather!
- 22) Even on dry camps it is likely that when you get up the grass outside will be wet, wear boots or sandals without socks as once they get wet they stay wet all day = manky feet.
- 23) Never walk around a camp site in bare feet. You WILL tread on a sharp stone, bit of glass etc cut your feet and possibly get an infection. One thing for sure is you will miss out on activities and may end up going home early.
- 24) Air your sleeping bag whenever possible – turn it inside out and if possible out on a line outside for a while.
- 25) When walking around the camp site never walk in another group's camping area or another patrol's area unless you are invited. Do not use other sites as a short cut.
- 26) On camp expect to work. Every meal time and at other times of day there are certain jobs to be done. If everybody works together then jobs get finished quicker and you get more activities or free time. If you are given a job and finish it be prepared to help others with their tasks until you are all finished.
- 27) On lots of camps we will be cooking on open fires and using axes, saws etc. Often we find this somehow causes damage to clothing – do not wear your best school trousers etc on camp. Also you will only be allowed to use an Axe or Saw once we have shown you how to correctly. You will require walking boots of similar before being allowed to use cutting tools.
- 28) Always assume birds – squirrels and insects have been crawling on your cooking kit and wipe it before use.
- 29) If smoke from the fires gets in your eyes (and it will) don't rub them, just move to another side of the fire.
- 30) Make sure you eat and drink plenty, camps are busy, active and can be hard work as well as fun. You will have more energy to enjoy yourself if you avoid getting hungry, tired and thirsty.
- 31) The same applies to keeping warm, put an extra layer or coat on before you get wet and cold. Don't leave it until it's too late.
- 32) When it's very hot and sunny on camp (yes it happens) keep your t-shirt on. Sunburn is worse than almost anything else on camp.
- 33) That said always expect it to rain! Keep your waterproof coat somewhere handy. Remember wet legs and shorts dry far quicker than long trousers – Jeans are a no no on camp. Cotton combat style trousers are far more practical.
- 34) If you see any little PICK IT UP and put it on the fire or in the bin. It does not matter who dropped it as it still needs picking up.
- 35) Just because an activity such as an assault course or similar is not staffed all the time does not mean free play for you without supervision. Please check with leaders first.
- 36) If you do happen to hurt yourself on camp tell the leaders straight away even if it's a minor cut or graze. We can then make sure it does not turn into something worse that will spoil your camp later.
- 37) Don't forget to flush the loo. The toilet fairy is not on the kit list so won't go around after you like it does at home.
- 38) Don't make practical jokes – they are rarely safe or funny. Plus will come back at you 10 fold.
- 39) Store your sleeping bag at home inside out on a coat hanger not rolled up. This stops the fibres from breaking up and makes sure any moisture has gone before the next camp.

Oh one last hint that a PL told me once: always take a used wet bar of soap on camp! Then it can't be proved it was never used..... But don't be too sure about that one.

HAVE FUN AND HELP EVERYONE ELSE HAVE FUN