

Prepared by Dylan Cannon

Gear Guru of Troop 58

Below is my basic 1-3 night camping gear list (I'm always looking for stuff I left out, or ways to cut stuff out, so feel free to give me suggestions). I noted the items that I think are essential for a comfortable/successful trip. The clothing items can be adjusted to the season.

One thing I've noticed is a lot of Scouts bring way more clothing than they use. When backpacking this is unnecessary weight and bulk. We have a pretty hard time keeping the pack weights down to 25% of the Scout's body weight, so extra stuff is a problem. As always, when we get closer to the backpacking trip, we'll hold our gear sessions... we really need to stress to the Scouts & parents the need to keep pack weight down. No one has ever accused me of being an "ultra-light" packer, but sharing equipment, and leaving unessential things at home goes a long way.

One thing we haven't covered in years past, that we probably should, is proper storage of gear when not in use. It's such a big investment, we need to make sure everyone knows how to make it last.

There are several essential items of equipment that I didn't mark as "must haves"... the reasons behind that:

- **Backpack:** A well-fitting, good supporting backpack is going to cost at least \$115 (external frame)-\$170 (internal frame)... if they aren't going to get a good pack, they might as well use one of the loaners that are available. Of all the gear on the list, this is the one I would NOT buy on line, as fit is essential. REI really does the best job around of fitting packs. This item always kills me, because it's so expensive, and they are guaranteed to outgrow it. As a Troop, it's only used about twice a year.
- **Tent:** This is another high dollar item (especially the light ones)... since the Scouts pair up, it is possible to just share instead of buying their own. Also, there are several extra tents in the troop. The good news is, if they buy a good tent, it should last for years.
- **Cook Stove:** While economical options are available, we always have PLENTY of stoves on the backpacking trips, and on the car trips we have the patrol stoves.
- **Water filter:** These are also expensive items. Our car camping trips usually have potable water available, and on the backpacking trips several members of the Troop have high quality filters.

The problem is the light gear (keeping their pack weight down) is expensive and the less expensive gear is usually heavier. A lot of the ultra-light gear isn't durable enough to give to kids (and usually very expensive). I look for stuff on sale, and research on line. If anyone has any questions about gear I'd be happy to answer questions; just have them shoot me an email.

As far as purchasing options,

Campmor (<http://www.campmor.com/>) has some of the best prices around and good customer service. I often research what I want, then see if Campmor has it.

REI (<http://www.rei.com/>) is more expensive, but with their no questions asked return policy, gear gurus, and dividend program for members (10% of non-sale purchases returned at the end of the year), they are always one of my favorites... & I have found some truly great deals at their annual garage sale.

There are a few other sites I look at, but REI & Campmor are my trusted go-to sites. Another option is the gear rental through Davidson College. I have not used their gear, but I have heard from several people that it is good stuff and reasonable.

Finally, maybe we should look into having an internal Troop gear sale. The older Scouts could sell/donate gear they have outgrown or items they have replaced with upgraded equipment. Just a thought.

Hope that helps.

Please let me know if you have questions.

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3 Season Gear List

Clothing

Outerwear

- # waterproof/breathable jacket
- # waterproof/breathable pants
- # fleece/synthetic jacket or wool sweater
- # synthetic hiking pants
- # synthetic shorts

Base Layer

- # midweight long john top
- # midweight long john bottoms
- synthetic long sleeve T-shirt
- # synthetic short sleeve T-shirt
- # synthetic briefs

Accessories

- # wool or fleece hat
- # midweight wool or fleece gloves

Footwear

- camp footwear (optional)
- waterproof hiking boots (optional)
- # wool or synthetic socks (3)
- # liner socks (2)

Extras

- sun hat
- bandanna

Gear

- internal or external frame backpack
- pack cover (or pack gear in trash bags inside the pack)
- tent
- # three-season down or synthetic sleeping bag (15° to 30°F)
- # inflatable sleeping pad
- trekking poles (optional)
- canister stove and fuel canisters
- # lighter and waterproof matches, & dryer lint in a Ziploc bag
- cookset
- # eating utensils, bowl, and insulated mug
- # headlamp & extra batteries
- # 32 oz. water bottles (2)
- water purification: filter, steri-pen, tablets, or drops
- pocket knife or multi-tool
- compass or GPS (and map)
- sunglasses
- # first-aid kit with personal medications
- personal locator beacon (optional)
- stuff sacks
- assorted zipper-lock bags
- # 1 or 2 large trash bags
- # duct tape wrapped around pencil or small stick
- # sunscreen (SPF 15+)
- 30% DEET bug repellent
- lip balm (SPF 15+)
- bear-bagging rope (or canister) if necessary
- toilet paper and trowel

#=Must have

3 Season Gear List