



CAMP HYGIENE

Your Campsite

The word camp immediately brings to mind the fun and excitement of living in a temporary home, doing, seeing and experiencing things which we would not normally manage in our daily routine .

The word campsite ideally brings to mind a secluded spot in the countryside, on a grassy bank, near a clear running stream – your perfect camping spot!!

The perfect campsite – is there such a place?

Well, the following are the good and bad points to look out for:

Good Points:

- It should be a secluded spot, but reasonably open
- It should be elevated and gently sloping so rainwater will run off, yet level enough for comfort
- If possible there should be shelter from prevailing winds
- The ground should have a layer of grass, sand or gravel to absorb any rain.
- There should be water close by, not only for drinking, but also for safe swimming
- A campsite should be far enough from people for privacy, yet close enough to town.

Bad Points:

- Avoid clay and black soil because they will turn to mud in rainy weather. Also avoid loose sand, it has a way of getting into everything including your food and clothes.
- Do not camp directly under trees, they may protect your tent in heavy weather, but when the rain stops they will go on dripping for hours
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afterwards. Falling branches are also a danger to be reckoned with.

- Do not pitch your tent in a gully or dry creek bed – flash floods do occur.
- Avoid pitching your tent beneath overhanging cliffs because of the danger of falling stones.

Water

It is very important that your campsite is very close to a potable drinking source. If there is no supply, a portable water tank would be ideal. It is important that no wastage of water takes place during camp.

Water Disposal

The easy way to dispose of water is to throw it away in an area close to your campsite. Do that and you will have some very unwelcome visitors on a twenty-four hour basis for the duration of your camp. The best solution is to make a filtering system of dry leaves, sand and gravel. After filtering the dirty water, collect the filtered water into a container and disperse the water by throwing it out in a circular movement, far away from the campsite. After serving as a filter, the dry leaves may be burnt to dispose of the grease and food scraps.

Toilets

Toilets and shower areas are to be placed as far away from the main campsite as possible. Showers have to be placed on sloping ground for better drainage.

Nowadays it is extremely common to use chemical toilets. It is very important that when chemical toilets are being emptied, a hole is dug deep enough to hold the material removed from the toilets, and that includes the soil that was removed from the hole itself.



Garbage

It is important that garbage is separated at source. Food left over, cans, plastic containers and bottles, cardboard and carton.

Food left-over can either be given to a farmer who possibly loaned you the use of the field in which you are camping, or may be collected

Cans are first flattened and then disposed of.

Plastic containers and bottles are first shrunk in boiling water and then disposed of.

Cardboard and carton can be burnt.

Storage of Food

Storage of food in camp is very crucial. All items are to be well packed and itemised, stored in a separate larder or tent and lifted well off the ground. One should take into consideration that fridges and freezers are now being used in camp.

Kitchen and Kitchen Equipment

All kitchen equipment is to be kept clean at all times. Utensils must be thoroughly washed after each use, dried and stored in the kitchen, ready to use again.

The kitchen and the Mess Area must be kept clean at all times.

Wash tubs

Wash tubs must be marked for

- a) kitchen use; and
- b) toilets

Personal Hygiene

Having fun in camp usually means getting grubby. Do not forget to wash the dirt off. A sponge bath will do a good cleaning up job. A camp shower will give you the comforts of home. Wash your hands after a visit to the

latrine and before you commence eating. Keep your personal utensils and gear clean.

Personal Kit

Every campers' kit must be kept clean, dry and free from any junk food.

Duties and Camp Inspection

Duties are done during camp to ensure that everything is clean, stored or in its allocated place. This must be done every day, or when necessary.

General Information

Sleeping Bags

1. A sleeping bag does not produce warmth; it traps air and slows down the rate of loss of heat from your body.
2. Excluding natural and human factors, it is usually accepted that the insulating value of a sleeping bag (its warmth) depends on the loft or thickness of the filling; that is, among bags of the same type of filling, the thicker the bag, the warmer it will be.
3. All sleeping bag fillings compress, lowering the thickness of insulation under the body. Use of a closed-cell foam mat or a therma-mat will minimise the heat loss to the ground. (An air mattress is unsuitable at lower temperatures)
4. Cut down on radiated heat loss by sleeping in a tent or under some shelter.
5. Moving air conducts heat away, so avoid draughts.
6. Sleeping bags have to "breathe" and are not waterproof unless covered with gore-tex, milair or reflex breathable waterproof fabric, and even then, the bag would let in rain around the zip and the hole for your face.
7. While synthetic-filled sleeping bags dry quicker and are warmer when wet than down, a wet sleeping bag is still a wet



sleeping bag and is uncomfortable. Take care to keep your sleeping bag dry, no matter what type of insulation.

Care and Cleaning

A sleeping bag will last for years with a little care, so to get the best out of your bag the following advice is given.

1. Allow the bag to air for at least 15 minutes before use.
2. Always use a ground sheet or tent floor
3. After use, open the zipper completely and leave the bag in the sun for a while before packing away
4. On arriving home allow the bag to air at least 24 hours (some of this time should be in the sun) before storing.
5. Store your bag in a loosely packed way. Do not store in the stuff sack for long periods.
6. Do not store against a concrete wall or floor
7. Do not roll up your bag; just cram it into the stuff sack
8. Use an inner sheet to help keep the bag clean (it is easier to wash than a sleeping bag)
9. Clean your bag after about two or three years or when necessary.

Footwear

Why wear boots? Why not joggers? In many cases joggers are all you will need, but when the going gets rougher and your pack gets heavier, good boots start to make sense. They keep your feet dry. They give ankle and knee support (important when carrying a heavy backpack on rough terrain) and many of the new models have shock absorption built into the boot to make for easy walking.

Your boots may not be your most expensive piece of equipment. They are, however, one of the most important items for your comfort, so put a lot of time and thought into buying them.

The shoes or boots you wear must have good thick soles and heels so sharp stones

cannot push into your foot when you walk over them. The soles should also have a tread pattern so they can get a grip on grass-covered hillsides. Smooth soles are useless on a steep grassy slope, no matter whether the grass is green or dry; in either case you are likely to slip three paces back for every one pace forward.

If the ground you plan to hike over is not particularly rocky or steep, stout-soled shoes will be quite adequate and you need not invest in a pair of boots. Boots, rather than shoes, are heavier for you to lift at every step; on the other hand, they give your ankles much more support. If you are prone to ankle injuries, lightweight boots are the thing for you.

If you are buying boots or shoes especially for hiking, it is a good idea to get a half-size larger than usual. This allows you to wear two pairs of socks, which provide extra cushioning for your feet, and also allow for your feet to swell a little, which they will do under the unaccustomed load.

Boot Care

Good boots are expensive, but with proper care they will give many years of service. Our suggestions for general maintenance are as follows:

1. After each trip, clean off any dirt or caked mud with a wet rag or water and a soft nylon brush.
2. Excessive exposure to water and heat can be very damaging, so wet boots should be dried as soon as practicable but never near a direct source of heat such as heaters, open fires, or on the back shelf of a car. Dry in a dry, shady, well-ventilated position, and, if boots are thoroughly saturated, stuff with crumpled newspaper which should be changed regularly until the boots are dry.
3. When boots are dry, treat leather with a light coat of appropriate preservative/waterproofing product. Remove the laces and clean separately. Pay special attention to cleaning and re-

proofing stitching and stress points to make sure they are free from dirt.

4. When not in use, store your boots in a cool dry place that allows air circulation around the boots.

Feet

Woollen socks are best because they are resilient, i.e. after you tread on them they tend to spring back rather than stay compressed. Wool is also absorbent, so that if your feet perspire you will not notice it. Mending socks by darning is good Scouting, but darned socks are not very good to hike in because the mended area can rub the skin and cause a blister.

Blisters are one thing you should avoid, and you can do so by always stopping at the first sign of a sore spot and covering the spot with an adhesive bandage or similar dressing to prevent any further rubbing.

Some more points to note in looking after your feet are as follows:

1. Each night, take off your socks and fluff them up by hitting them against a stick.
2. When you stop for lunch on a long day's hike, change each sock to the other foot; the pressure comes in different places, and further helps to prevent blisters.
3. Avoid swimming for long periods before hiking because it softens the feet too much.
4. Keep your feet clean by washing and drying carefully, especially between the toes.