Equipment Checklist

Backpacking Equipment

Carry on Your Person

Essential

☐ Matches, in waterproof container*
☐ Knife, pocket*
☐ Compass, cased*
☐ First-aid kit, personal*
☐ Survival kit (made)
☐ Nylon cord, 200-lb. test, 20 feet*
☐ Fire starters
☐ Sunglasses, case, safety loop
☐ Bandanna
☐ Money, identification, fishing permit (all in waterproof bag)
☐ Pencil or ballpoint pen
☐ Notebook, pocket-size
☐ Toilet paper in plastic bag

Optional

☐ Comb, pocket*
☐ Watch, (preferably) waterproof*
☐ Nail clippers
☐ Documents for customs (if needed)
☐ Flashlight, small; extra batteries

Wear

(Keep extra or emergency items in pack pockets or near the top of the pack for use when needed.)

☐ Boots, hiking—ankle-high (broken in but not broken down)
☐ Socks, medium weight
☐ Trousers, uniform*
☐ Shirt, long-sleeved (for sun protection), uniform*
☐ Belt, uniform, webbed*
☐ Hat, broad-brimmed

*Starred items are available through your local Scouting distributor.

Carry in Pack

The choice of a pack is a personal thing. Each youth or leader must live with and out of his or her pack for a long time. A high-quality pack and pack frame will save time and money in the long run. The Black Bull Jr. Combo I and the Black Bull Horizon II Combo available from BSA Supply Division are excellent choices. Pack frames also are a matter of personal taste; they offer many advantages, especially when used with a pack designed for them. Other frame-pack combinations are available—a potential purchaser should try out each to be sure. Shoulder pads may be welcome additions.

Keep often-used items in pack pockets or near the top of the pack. Food should be protected, plainly marked, and readily accessible.

Clothing

☐ Rainsuit with hood, or poncho, lightweight*
☐ Windbreaker, hooded, water-repellent; unlined ski parka
☐ Shirt, long-sleeved, lightweight
☐ Shirt, jac-shirt, sweater, or sweatshirt—warm, long-sleeved
☐ T-shirts (2)
☐ Undershorts (2)
☐ Socks, medium weight (3–5 pairs), wool or polypro
☐ Sneakers (for camp wear)
☐ Gaiters (for hiking muddy or snowy trails)

Sleeping Gear

☐ Sleeping bag;* washable liner* (carry in stuff bag or wrap in waterproof plastic, cinch down to 10 by 16 inches)
☐ Sleeping pad, foam
☐ Ground cloth,* waterproof light nylon or medium plastic, slightly larger than sleeping bag
☐ Long johns (choose for lowest temperature expected)
☐ Cap, warm stocking, for night
☐ Flashlight;* spare bulb and batteries*

Eating Gear

☐ Bowl, plastic
☐ Cup, plastic
☐ Spoon, large
☐ Water bottle, polyethylene*

Toilet Articles

☐ Soap, liquid, biodegradable, in plastic bag
☐ Towel, small, in plastic bag
☐ Personal toiletries in plastic bag
☐ Mirror, small, metal or plastic
☐ Toilet paper in plastic bag

☐ Sunscreen and lip salve
☐ Insect repellent
☐ Foot powder
☐ Comb or hairbrush

Optional

☐ Head net or insect netting
☐ Camera and film in waterproof bag
☐ Binoculars in case
☐ Laundry soap
☐ Notepad and pencil
☐ Fishing gear (very compact kit), telescoping rod
☐ Bible or prayer book
☐ Sunglasses
☐ Plastic bags—assorted sizes
☐ Fishnet underwear
☐ Field identification guides

Crew Gear for Backpacking

Shelter

☐ Tent or tarp, nylon, lightweight or improvised from 10-by-12-foot plastic sheeting, rigged as "A" tent or lean-to for two campers; plus one extra for dining fly*
☐ Tent pegs
☐ Poles, collapsible

Cooking Gear

☐ Pots, 4-quart, lightweight (6)
☐ Frying pans, 8-inch (2)
☐ Spoon, large, cooking-type (2)
☐ Can opener, small roll-type
☐ Can opener, puncture-type
☐ Water purification tablets or liquid
☐ Spatula, medium
☐ Scouring pads
☐ Soap, liquid, in plastic bottle
☐ Sanitizing tablets*
☐ Tongs, hot-pot
☐ Water containers, collapsible

Camp Tools

☐ Saw, folding
☐ File, 5-inch, ignition
☐ Trowel, for digging catholes
☐ Repair kit with cutting pliers, sewing kit, wire, nylon cord, adhesive tape, straps, plastic-repair kit, etc.
☐ Duct tape (wrapped around a fuel bottle)

Emergency and Miscellaneous Gear

☐ First-aid kit (suggested contents, page 59)
☐ Antiseptic
☐ Mouth-barrier devices for CPR
☐ Latex or vinyl gloves
☐ Goggles or other eye protection
☐ Snakebite kit* (optional)
☐ Maps, topographical
☐ Compass, magnetic
☐ Tote-litter bag* with plastic liner
☐ One 150-foot length of ¼-inch nylon rope (for hanging bear bag)
☐ Toilet paper (extra) in plastic bag
☐ Shock cord* (for securing gear)
☐ Bags, plastic
☐ Burlap or nylon bags for hanging food and smellables (4)
☐ Weather radio

Optional

☐ Gloves, cooking
☐ Knife and fork, cooking-type
☐ Paper towels
☐ Sponges
☐ Small funnel
☐ Pack stove and fuel
☐ Fuel bottles
☐ Reflector oven
☐ Special gear for mountaineering, conservation, etc.
☐ Global Positioning System (GPS) unit

Canoeing Equipment

Weight and compactness are as critical in canoe camping as in backpacking—sometimes you'll have to portage. Three persons to a canoe make portaging easier. But if whitewater is on the route, two to a canoe might be better.

The following equipment list is for a group of six or eight people sharing the group gear and food for 10 to 14 days. A variety of nonperishable foods is available at your supermarket. For tips on menu planning, see chapter 5.

Group gear can be put in separate cooking, tentage, and food packs. It might be better, however, to see that each canoe has its own share of group duffel—in personal packs—as insurance against complete loss.

Wilderness Use Policy of the Boy Scouts of America

For the purposes of this policy, all privately or publicly owned backcountry and designated wildernesses are to be considered "wilderness." The Outdoor Code of the Boy Scouts of America applies to outdoor behavior generally, but for treks into wilderness, Leave No Trace camping methods must be used. Within the outdoor program of the Boy Scouts of America, there are many different camping-skill levels. Camping practices that are appropriate for day outings, long-term Scout camp, or short-term unit camping do not apply to wilderness areas. Wherever they go, Scouts and Explorers must adopt attitudes and patterns of behavior that respect the rights of others, including future generations, to enjoy the outdoors.

In wildernesses, it is crucial to minimize our impact on particularly fragile ecosystems such as mountains, lakes, streams, deserts, and seashores. Since our recreational use varies from one season of the year to the next, we must adjust to these changing conditions as well, to avoid damaging the environment.

The Boy Scouts of America emphasizes these practices for all troops, posts, and ships planning to use the wilderness:

- Contact the landowner or land-managing agency (Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state agency, private landowner, etc.) well in advance of the outing to learn the regulations for that area and to obtain required permits and current maps.
- Always obtain a tour permit, available through local council service centers. Meet all conditions specified and carry the permit on the trip.
- Participate in Leave No Trace training for adult leaders, or be proficient and experienced in the leadership and skills required for treks into the wilderness.
- Match the ruggedness of high-adventure experiences to the skills, physical ability, and maturity of those taking part. Save more rugged treks for older youth members who are more proficient and experienced in outdoor skills.
- For your group, conduct pretrip training that stresses proper wilderness behavior, rules, and skills for all of the conditions that may be encountered.
- Use backpacking stoves, particularly where the fuel supply is limited or open fires are restricted. An adult knowledgeable in the use of the stove(s) must supervise. If a fire is necessary, keep it as small as possible and use established fire lays where available in safe areas. After use, erase all signs.
- Emphasize the need for minimizing impact on the land through proper camping practices, and for preserving the solitude and quiet of remote areas. Camp at low-use areas; avoid popular sites that show signs of heavy use.
- Leave dogs, radios, and cassette or CD players at home.
- Use plastic (not metal or glass) food containers that are lightweight and reusable. Carry out unburnable trash of your own and any left by others.
- Dig catholes for latrines and locate them at least 200 feet from any source of natural water.
- Wash clothes, dishes, and bodies at least 200 feet from any source of natural water.
- Where a choice is available, select equipment in earth-tone colors that blend with natural surroundings.
- Look at and photograph; never pick or collect.
- Follow trail switchbacks and stay on established trails.
- Treat wildlife with respect and take precautions to avoid dangerous encounters with wildlife. Leave snakes, bears, ground squirrels, and other wildlife alone.
- On a canoeing trip, carry canoes into the foliage on shore so they will not be visible to other outdoor users.
- Respect the quest of others to enjoy the solitude and silence of the backcountry.
- Demonstrate respect by taking care of the outdoors. Land stewardship is everyone's responsibility. Do your part to leave wild America for future generations.

The Call of Adventure: A Message to Trekkers

The exhilaration of being in the wild outdoors is hard to top. Free from the distractions of everyday life, a trekker has a chance to pause and reflect. There are no ringing telephones, televisions blaring tragic events, traffic congestion, school, work, or meetings.

Living in the outdoors is a return to a simpler life. The air is fresh and invigorating, the whisper of a gentle breeze in the trees is rejuvenating, the gurgle of a brook or stream soothes your soul, the warmth of afternoon sun rays assures you that all is right with God's world. The outdoors beckons, offering a welcome respite. It also reminds you of your commitment to leave the land as pristine as you found it.

To enjoy a trek, you must be fit. Part of preparing for marvelous outdoor experiences means undertaking a physical conditioning program to enhance your aerobic capacity and to tone your muscles. Being fit means feeling good about yourself not only physically, but mentally and emotionally, too. When you're fit, you're alert, able to sleep soundly, refreshed, and more confident. Your antenna is up—you relate more effectively to other people, your outlook is positive, and you are confident of your abilities.

Having adequately planned and trained for your trek, you will be prepared—to raft a turbulent river spewing spray in all directions, to ascend a craggy peak that requires a circuitous route to reach the summit, or to glide across fresh powder snow on skis. You will be prepared for all kinds of weather: driving rains, pelting hail, unforecasted snow, and head winds that make progress slow.

You will be prepared to leave little or no trace of your visit. Proper planning is fundamental to wildland stewardship. You will plan and train in order to leave the land better than you found it for future generations to enjoy.

You will know that you can rely on the members of your crew. Being in the outdoors is a maturing experience as you soon realize that you can't do everything alone. Your endeavors must blend with those of others; you share your needs and they express theirs. You may have a hot spot or a blister that cries for attention, your pack may begin to separate at the seams, your sleeping bag may get soaked when you slip crossing a stream, or you may simply be hungry or tired—but you learn that you can depend on the members of your crew. And they depend on you! Everyone realizes, "We're in this together." The crew works together to meet everyone's needs.

There is great strength in knowledge—knowing about appropriate outdoor clothing, such as polypropylene, polar fleece, wool, nylon, and Gore-Tex; knowing about proper nutrition—a blend of simple and complex carbohydrates, proteins, and fats; knowing how to pace your crew so that crew members avoid overheating and sweating, making them prone to hypothermia in cold weather; knowing that drinking lots of properly disinfected water is crucial to your well-being; knowing how to protect yourself from sunburn that may cause pain now and skin cancer later in life; knowing how to conserve the environment and preserve the experience of future trekkers.

The best high-adventure treks are planned, led, and carried out by youth. The purpose of Scouting is to help youth grow and mature. This happens when youths are responsible for their own plans and for making their own decisions. Teenagers usually can accomplish far more than many adults are willing to acknowledge. Adult leaders should offer suggestions and alternatives and give thoughtful guidance, but should let the youths plan and carry out their trek. People learn from experience. We learn best from experiences when we are responsible for the results. We may make some mistakes, but we learn from them. Most young people are eager to learn when given the opportunity.

Perhaps the greatest outcome of high adventure is the satisfaction of successfully meeting the challenge of doing something that only a few others have attempted, and doing more than you ever thought you could. By making prudent choices and good decisions in a variety of situations, you succeed as an individual and as a crew.