

## Cold Weather Camping Tips:

Cold weather is just another season to camp in. As you and your unit will be prepared it won't be a bad experience. This list is a good place to start. These are tips and not meant for official medical advice. Adjust accordingly.

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### Tips:

- Stay Dry. All **rain gear** is appropriate. This includes tarps for under your tent. Poncho, Boots, etc...
- **Boots to wear all day.** Insulated. School shoes shouldn't go out on campouts. Always good to have a backup pair of boots (insulated or non) or old shoes or hiking boots in case your boots get soaked.
- **Bring a sealable tote** on cold campouts. You can fit more cloths and blankets and you can store them outside your tent without your stuff getting wet. You can bring your clothes that you plan on wearing in the morning inside with you to stuff in at the bottom of your sleeping bag to stay warm.
- **Layered clothing** for your feet, legs and body. Each layer traps heat. You must keep your body core warm. If your hands and feet are cold put on another shirt to help keep your core warm. The last couple layers should be zippered or buttoned so you can control how much heat to keep without getting too sweaty.
  - "Cotton Kills" – try for blended clothes. Fleece is a great thing to have out in the cold. Multiple t-shirts are great.
  - Long underwear and then jeans
  - Layered socks work too. You can have regular cotton socks on first to wick away moisture and then wool socks over it. Make sure boots can accommodate the two different types of socks. Don't come out in the ice with only cottons socks. Only wool/wool blended socks is good too.
  - Make sure you have twice the amount of socks needed (2 per day) to change when getting sweaty or wet.
  - Garbage bag to keep dirty clothes. They will be sweaty 😊 This will keep the tent stink down.
- **Overalls, Winter Jacket, scarf, gloves. Stocking Hat (This is a must)**
  - Snowpants or rain suit pants. The idea here is to keep wind and rain off you. A cheap alternative is a pair of cheap sweat pants sprayed with a tent silicon waterproofing spray.
- Sleeping:
  - From the ground up here are the layers involved: (on really cold campouts you can bring in straw bales)
    - Ground -> Tarp -> Straw (if really cold) -> Tent floor -> Emergency/Space blanket (looks like tin foil) -> Sleeping pad -> Blanket (Wool or a moving blanket are the best) -> Sleeping bag(s) -> More Blankets.
  - **Zero degree sleeping bag or a couple 40 degree bags along with blankets** (fleece throws work great wool blankets are the best.) Wool will still keep you warm even if they are wet.
  - **Emergency / Space blankets** act as a radiant barrier reflecting the cold ground back down and the heat back up to the body.
  - **A couple of extra heavy blankets** (including a space blanket). 1 Blanket below is worth two above.
  - Wear a stocking hat while you are sleeping. A lot of heat leaves through your head.

- Bring an **old-fashioned water bottle** (or a water bottle with a really good seal) to bring in your bag to help warm your bag and keep you warm. A hot water bottle will keep its heat for around 6 hours. Then it should stay at 98 degrees after.
- **Have dedicated sleep clothes.** Wear a pair of shorts or sweat pants, t-shirt and socks only in the sleeping bag. Fleece pullover. Do not wear the clothes you had on all day in your sleeping bag. They are dirty and dirt makes you cold. DO NOT WEAR WHAT YOU WILL WEAR IN THE MORNING. A layer of sweat on your body will turn to ice when you leave your tent. It will be very hard to warm up with that layer of sweat turning to ice.
- If you want to warm up your cloths in the morning, you can stuff them in the bag with you until they warm up when you wake up. Change in your bag. Nothing like pulling in stone cold clothes into your bag to wake you up. 😊
- **Water Bottle and a camp mug** to keep hydrated. You should drink at least 2 large water bottles of water a day and that's with little activity. The camp mug is to drink hot liquids.
- **Pee Bottle (Properly Marked)** When you are cold you will want to pee more. Better to have a pee bottle in your tent so you don't have to go outside at night... Old Gatorade bottles work. Cheap \$2 water bottle from Dollar General works great.
- **Snacks.** Bring protein snacks with you like trail mix, jerky, peanuts, cheese, etc... Your body will need more fuel, salt, and water to combat the cold.
- **Hand Warmers:** Get the kind you shake. 2 per day on average.
- **Foot Warmers:** These stick to your socks and do work but not necessary.

Other items:

- Simple, **cheap day pack** you can buy at thrift store for a couple bucks
- **Your Scout Handbook**
- **Paper, Pencil**
- **Flashlight** (head lamp is best)
- **Mess kit** (Frisbees work great for plates, silverware, and a cup)
- **Dirty Clothes Bag**
- **Camp chair** (the boys can leave one camp chair in the troop trailer)
- A couple gallon size **ziplock bags** to keep stuff dry.
- **Small first aid kit**
- **Pocket knife** (if they have been trained and received their "Toten-Chit Award" otherwise leave the pocket knife at home.)
- **Toiletries:** Soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, washcloth, baby wipes
- **Rope:** roughly 10 ft or so of clothesline or twine.
- **A positive attitude.** This goes a long way on campouts especially when it doesn't always go as planned. Although they make for great stories and bragging rights for later scouts are successful because people help people and make it a good experience even though things go wrong.