

Living Comfortably in the Outdoors

Rudyard Kipling wrote, "Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who hath heard the birch-log burning? Who is quick to read the noises of the night? Let him follow with the others, for the young men's feet are turning to the camps of proved desire and known delight!" In other words, camping is fun! It's a chance to get away from the "busy-ness" and distractions of everyday life and spend time hanging out in the woods with your closest friends.

Camping is also the foundation of many other Scouting activities. Scouts camp for fun, but they also camp so they can be closer to great spots for fishing, rock climbing, geocaching, hiking, and a host of other activities. Comfort in the outdoors means finding a balance between skills and equipment. In the movies, we often see a hero with such good skills that all he needs is a knife. On the other hand, people without skills may only feel comfortable camping in a fully stocked motor home. The more you know, the less equipment you need. The goal is not to be like a Navy Seal, but to have good outdoor skills so you feel more comfortable and confident while living outdoors.

This month's meetings and main event will help your Scouts develop good camping skills so you can enjoy outings more and open the door to many fun outdoor activities.

Objectives

This month's activities should:

- Instill the knowledge and skills to be comfortable in camp.
- Emphasize the use of outdoor ethics to protect the environment.
- Teach knots and when to use them.
- Help Scouts understand outdoor shelters.
- Teach the importance of keeping camp clean.
- Foster a sense of communion with nature and God.
- Build self-confidence by learning and demonstrating skills.
- Help Scouts work cooperatively in small groups while living outdoors.

RELATED ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS

- Tenderfoot requirements 1, 2, and 3
- Second Class requirements 2, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e, 3f, and 3g
- First Class requirements 3, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, and 4e
- Camping merit badge
- Firem'n Chit
- Ranger

Leadership Planning

As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items when choosing camping as your program feature during your planning meetings.

1. Where do we want to camp?
2. What other activities do we want to do while we are there?
3. What equipment will we need?
4. What type of evening program do we want, and which group should be in charge?
5. Should we cook in small groups or as one large unit?
6. Who needs to learn basic camp skills?
7. How can we involve parents?
8. To meet our needs, what should we change in the sample meeting plans?

PARENTS CAN HELP WITH THE CAMPING PROGRAM FEATURE BY:

1. Providing transportation for the campout
2. Helping with purchasing food before the campout
3. Making sure every Scout has appropriate equipment

SPECIFIC CAMPING INFORMATION

Outdoor Ethics

You should always leave your campsite looking the same—if not better—as it did when you arrived. Outdoor ethics means that we follow the principles of both Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly.

Leave No Trace principles apply to most back-country activities:

- Plan ahead and prepare.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Leave what you find.
- Minimize campfire impacts.
- Respect wildlife.
- Be considerate of other visitors.

Tread Lightly principles apply to situations involving all-terrain vehicles, personal watercraft, and horses, among other things:

- Travel responsibly.
- Respect the rights of others.
- Educate yourself.
- Avoid sensitive areas.
- Do your part.

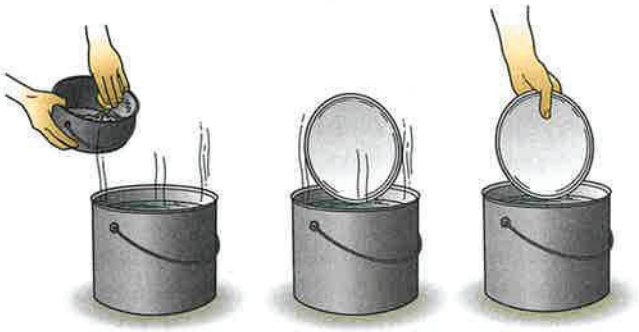


Three-Bin Dishwashing

The best way to wash dishes while camping is by following the same method restaurants use. But rather than using three sinks, campers use three wash bins. The first bin contains hot, soapy water, the second is filled with clean, hot rinse water, and the third bin contains cool water with a sanitizer such as bleach to kill bacteria.

Before washing, make sure you use a rubber spatula to scrape excess food into a trash bag. Immerse and wash each dish in the first bin, rinse in the second bin, sanitize with a dip in the third bin, then leave dishes to air dry. A rack or mesh hang bag works well. Save pots for the end as they are often the dirtiest, and washing the other dishes first provides better water quality. If the water gets too dirty, simply change the water and continue washing.

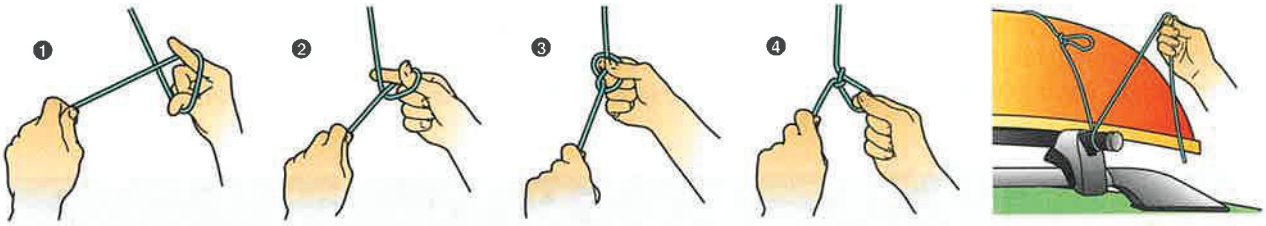
To dispose of the bins of dishwater, pour the wash bin water and rinse water through a strainer and into a bucket. The water can then be dumped in a wastewater drain, sump hole, or broadcast over a large area. Finally, pour the sanitizer into the rinse bin, then into the wash bin, then into the bucket, and properly dispose of it. When this process is complete, all three bins and the bucket will have been cleaned and sanitized. Shake the food particles from the strainer into a trash bag, and properly dispose of or pack out the trash bag.



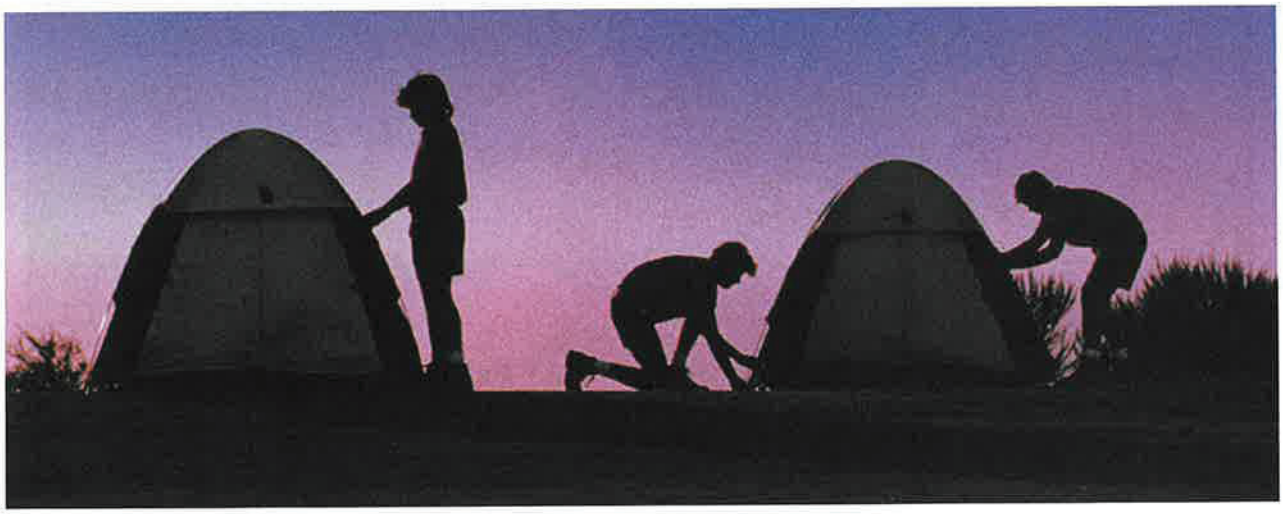
Hot Hot Cold

The Trucker's Hitch

The trucker's hitch is a particularly valuable knot for securing loads and tarps. This knot provides a mechanical advantage and works like a pulley system—but without the pulleys. This knot is very useful in securing boats to a car or for tightening a clothesline.



Tying a trucker's (or traveler's) hitch



THE KODIAK CHALLENGE

The advanced main event this month is the Kodiak Challenge. This is a special opportunity for adults and older Scouts (those who are 14 or older and have met other requirements) to reinforce their leadership skills during a three- to six-day trek of their own choosing.

The Kodiak program is described in detail in *The Kodiak Challenge* (No. 511-014). Here's a quick overview.

Kodiak is designed to be an adventure that pushes the boundaries of the participants—one that will encourage them to try new things that may be out of their comfort zones. It is an experience—but one that has its underpinnings in the application of the leadership skills learned in the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops or Crews, National Youth Leadership Training, and/or National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience. It is an adventure with a purpose—just as is all of Scouting.

A Kodiak trek is an expedition, a road trip, an adventure, a visit to another country, a whitewater rafting trip, a cross-state bicycle adventure, a Scout-operated sports week for special-needs youth—any experience that helps push the participants out of their personal comfort zones for the sake of adventure and learning.

A trek is an adventure that pushes boundaries. Not all troops or crews go on high-adventure outings, and Kodiak need not be a high adventure to be a great experience. Of course a natural setting is always a plus, but the key is *adventure.* For some units, it may be more challenging to do a weeklong city tour than a backpacking trip that is similar to other trips the unit has taken in the past. Do what works for your unit, but do something that is truly a challenge to each participant. Treks should be a minimum of five days.

However, remember that the Kodiak Challenge is not about the trek; it is about leadership skills. During the Kodiak trek, BSA leadership skills will provide a framework for you to help participants live out the adventure—and grow from it. Each day there is an activity to showcase one or more BSA leadership skills previously taught in the unit Introduction to Leadership Skills course and at NYLT and NAYLE. In addition, at various times during each trek, participants will discover that leadership skills are essential for success.



CAMPING GAMES

Knot-Tying Relay

Equipment: One 6 ½-foot rope per team; Scout staff or long stick

How to play: The teams line up in relay formation with the first Scout about 10 feet from the staff, which is held horizontally, 30 inches off the ground. On the signal, "Bowline (or other knot), go!" the first Scout runs up, rope in hand, ties the rope to the staff with a bowline, has it approved by the judge, unties it, runs back, and gives the rope to the next Scout, who repeats the procedure, and so on until all players have tied the knot.

Scoring: The first team to finish wins.

Note: For the square knot, sheet bend, and fisherman's knot, join the ends of the rope with a taut knot with the staff running through the loop. For the clove hitch, two half hitches, and timber hitch, tie the rope to the staff and pull taut. For the taut-line hitch and bowline, tie the knots so that the staff runs through the loop.

Tent Mess Relay

Equipment: Several tents, such as those used during skills instruction

How to play: At one end of the room, make a large pile of tents, tarps, and poles. Teams line up in relay fashion at the other end of the room. On your signal, one person from each team runs to the pile, selects one item, and returns to tag the next player. The players on each team continue running up to retrieve tent parts until they are able to set up their tent. Players who retrieve the wrong tent parts must return them and select other parts.

Scoring: The first team to set up a tent successfully with all the correct parts wins.

Notes: For best results, use freestanding tents. However, for an added challenge and to prolong the game, you can play outside and include tent pegs.

Three-Bin Washing Relay

Equipment: A set of three washing bins and a bucket for each group; a water source (hose or spigot)

How to play: Place the washing bins at one end of the room. Teams line up in relay fashion. On your signal, players take turns running up with buckets to fill the bins, one bucketful per bfin. Once the bins are filled, a player runs up and simulates the process of washing a pot. The last player goes through the process of cleaning and sanitizing the bins.

Scoring: The first team to complete all steps wins.

Notes: This game is best played outdoors.

What Do I Smell?

Equipment: Several paper bags, each holding a different-smelling article (licorice, onion half, coffee, orange peels, cinnamon, etc.); paper, and pencil for each team; blindfolds

How to play: Place the bags about 2 feet apart on a table or bench. On signal, a blindfolded Scout walks down the line and sniffs each bag for 5 seconds. When all members of each team have passed by, the teams huddle and write down the names of the different articles they smelled.

Scoring: Award 10 points for each correct answer.

Note: Instead of concealing items in bags, put them in cups, tape foil covers over them, and punch holes in the covers with a fork. The Scouts sit at a table, passing and smelling the items.



E.D.G.E. Ideas

***E**xplain* how it is done—Tell them.
***D**emonstrate* the steps—Show them.
***G**uide* learners as they practice—Watch them do it.
***E**nable* them to succeed on their own—Have them practice/teach it.

EXPLAIN

- Describe the Kodiak Challenge.
- Discuss the principles of Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly.
- Explain how to choose a good campsite.
- Discuss how to properly dispose of human waste.

DEMONSTRATE

- Demonstrate the three-bin dishwashing technique.
- Show different types of tents and backpacks, and explain their features.
- Set up a model campsite at your meeting place.
- Show the proper way to pack a backpack, taking into account weight distribution and ease of access.

GUIDE

- Have Scouts discuss essential vs. nonessential camping gear.
- Teach Scouts knots, and have them practice tying them.
- Have Scouts practice setting up tents.
- At the end of an outing, have Scouts inspect the site for any traces of the group's presence.
- Using old tent parts, teach Scouts how to make field repairs, and let them practice.

ENABLE

- Have Scouts teach camping skills to Webelos Scouts.
- Have Scouts clean and season the unit's Dutch ovens.
- Make fire starters for camping.
- Encourage Scouts to make posters illustrating Leave No Trace principles.

MAIN EVENT SUMMARIES

ESSENTIAL	CHALLENGING	ADVANCED
Overnight Activity	Overnight Activity	Five to Six Days
Overnight car camp—Find a campsite that you can drive to and that offers plenty of opportunities for outdoor adventures. Camp overnight, and hone your camping skills.	Camping in the teens—Return to Scouting's early days by camping using techniques found in the earliest Scout manuals.	Kodiak Challenge—Complete the Kodiak Challenge, an opportunity for older Scouts to reinforce their leadership skills on an exciting trek adventure of five to six days.

CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Plan Ahead/Knots

Week 1 Date_____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Prepare several decks of index cards listing various items of camping gear, one item per card. Have small groups sort the cards in order of importance, setting aside items that shouldn't be taken camping.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Review the Scout basic essentials from the *Boy Scout Handbook;* discuss why each item should be considered essential.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	• Learn and practice the square knot, two half hitches, taut-line hitch, clove hitch, timber hitch, bowline, and sheet bend. Discuss how each is used in camping. • Make a list of personal camping gear Scouts should have.		7:20 p.m.
	• Review the above skills. • Make a camp gadget using lashings. • Learn the trucker's hitch and explain its use in camping.		
	• Review the above skills. • Practice splicing. • Learn how to tie a monkey's fist or woggle.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	• Discuss plans for the main event. • Review what personal and group equipment will be needed.		7:55 p.m.
Game 15 minutes	Play Knot-Tying Relay (described earlier).		8:10 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
TOTAL 90 MINUTES OF MEETING			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.

CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Using Durable Surfaces/Tents

Week 2 Date_____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Set up a display of several types of tents. As Scouts arrive, discuss the different tents and the best use of each.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Review the second principle of Leave No Trace (travel and camp on durable surfaces). Discuss how this principle applies to both frontcountry and backcountry activities. Point out any special local considerations, such as wetlands, in an area where you like to camp.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 40 minutes 	• Discuss the factors in selecting a good campsite. • Practice setting up tents. (For an extra challenge, set up tents while blindfolded.)		7:20 p.m.
	• Discuss how to maintain and repair tents, both in the field and back home. • Brainstorm what tools and repair supplies you should take camping (example: duct tape wrapped around a fuel bottle for use in pitching tents or tent poles).		
	• Review the above skills. • Discuss alternative and emergency shelters and what supplies you should carry to make them easier to construct.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	• Plan a cooking menu. • Begin meal planning and create a duty roster for the main event.		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Tent Mess Relay (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.

CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Proper Sanitation and Dishwashing

Week 3 Date_____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Look through your group camping gear for dirty equipment (especially pots and utensils). Display it as Scouts arrive so they see how the unit needs to work on cleanliness and sanitation.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 15 minutes	Discuss how to dispose of waste properly, including: • The concept of "pack it in/pack it out" • The dos and don'ts of human waste • Why you shouldn't leave things behind		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	Learn the three-bin washing system.		7:25 p.m.
	• Review the three-bin washing system. • Learn to wash dishes while using a camp stove. • Explain how this is different.		
	• Learn the proper care of Dutch ovens and group cooking gear. • Discuss what sanitation gear every group needs.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	• Each group fills out a duty roster for upcoming campout. • Identify special equipment needed for additional activities.		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Three-Bin Washing Race (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.

CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Fire and Stoves

Week 4 Date_____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Prepare a Dutch oven dessert or other camping treat and serve as Scouts arrive.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Discuss how to minimize campfire impacts.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	• Learn to use a camp stove. • Learn the basic of fire building, including tinder, kindling, and fuel.		7:20 p.m.
	• Review the above skills. • Learn how to use a backpacking stove. • Discuss or make fire starters you can take camping (examples: dryer lint, paraffin-soaked cardboard, cotton balls dipped in petroleum jelly).		
	• Review the above skills. • Discuss or practice starting a fire without matches. • Learn to cook without using utensils.		
Breakout Groups 20 minutes	• Finalize plans for the main event. • Plan the group's portion of the evening program (song, skit, or story).		7:55 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play What Do I Smell? (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.

CAMPING

Main Event: Overnight Car Camp

Date_____

Logistics

Location: _____

_____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Overnight

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster_____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self_____

Tour and activity plan: Completed_____ Submitted _____

Essential (Tier I)

Find a campsite that you can drive to and that offers plenty of opportunities for outdoor adventures. Camp overnight and hone your camping skills.

Equipment List	• Camping gear (individual and group) • Backpacks, canoes, or bicycles to get the group to and from the campsite (optional) • Food • Water • Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.)
Activity	• Choose your campsite and event location. • Plan camping duty roster and meal plan. • Develop a schedule that allows plenty of time for setting up camp the right way, including establishing defined sleeping, social, and cooking areas. • Practice camping skills Scouts need to work on (fire building, cooking, knots, etc.). • Participate in other activities as desired (hiking, boating, mountain biking, etc.). • On departure, be sure you are leaving no trace of your presence.
Safety	Normal camping safety guidelines apply. Use the buddy system; cell phones are a good idea as appropriate. Have a first-aid kit handy.

Notes

For an added challenge, plan for all Scouts to reach camp under their own power—by hiking, cycling, or canoeing. If possible, have them carry their own gear. All could travel by the same means, or different groups could choose different options.

CAMPING

Main Event: Camping in the Teens

Date_____

Logistics

Location: _____

_____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Overnight or weekend

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster_____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self_____

Tour and activity plan: Completed_____ Submitted _____

Challenging (Tier II)

Return to Scouting's early days by camping using techniques found in the earliest Scout manuals.

Equipment List	• Camping gear (individual and group) based on early Scout manuals • Food • Water • Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.)
Activity	• Obtain a reprint of Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* or the first *Handbook for Boys.* (Do an Internet search for PDF versions.) Research early camping methods and activities. • Have Scouts create their own camping gear and come up with group gear similar to that used in Scouting's early days. • Practice camping skills Scouts need to work on (fire building, cooking, knots, etc.). • Create a weekend program that includes playing some of the games described in early handbooks. • Plan menus based on cooking from scratch over fires instead of using stoves and backpacking-style food.
Safety	Normal camping safety guidelines apply. Use the buddy system, and have a first-aid kit. Place a waypoint at camp so you can find your way back. Cell phones are a good idea, as appropriate.

Notes

Many techniques in early Scout handbooks are not appropriate today, especially those that would violate Leave No Trace principles. Keep to the spirit of the early handbooks, but adapt as necessary.

CAMPING
Main Event: Kodiak Challenge

Date_____

Logistics

Location: _____

_____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Five to six days

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster_____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self_____

Tour and activity plan: Completed_____ Submitted _____

Advanced (Tier III)

Complete the Kodiak Challenge, an opportunity for older Scouts to reinforce their leadership skills on an exciting trek adventure of five to six days.

Equipment List	• Camping gear (individual and group) • Food • Water • Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.) • Trek-specific gear
Activity	• Obtain and study *The Kodiak Challenge* (No. 511-014). • Get permission from your council training committee to conduct a Kodiak trek. • Plan and conduct the trek as described in *The Kodiak Challenge.*
Safety	Normal camping safety guidelines apply. Use the buddy system, and have a first-aid kit handy. Cell phones are a good idea, as appropriate.

Notes

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Books

Camping and *Pioneering* merit badge pamphlets

Boy Scout Handbook

Fieldbook

Knots and How to Tie Them

Organizations and Websites

Leave No Trace
Website: www.LNT.org

Tread Lightly
Website: www.treadlightly.org

Related Program Features

Geocaching, Hiking, Orienteering, and Outdoor Ethics