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**The FUNdamentals of Fishing**

**FUNDAMENTALS OF FISHING**



by  
 Jon Anderson

*If you're looking for a place for easy to learn how to, beginners, basic, first time, how do you, tips, skills, fundamentals and technique of fishing, then you've come to the right spot.*

**Don't know a thing about fishing?**

**In all reality . . .**

**You only need to put a small hook on the line, a small split shot just above the hook, and a bobber a foot or two above the hook with a wax worm or red wiggler imbedded on it.**

**Throw it out and wait.**

**If you don't get a bite in a few minutes, raise the bobber another foot or two.**

***That's pretty much it!***

**You don't know what a split shot is or what a bobber is?  
 Wondering what the heck is a wax worm or red wiggler?  
 You'll learn by browsing this site!**

*Now, I do not claim to be a "know-it all" on how to fish. This site is a collection of methods that have been gathered from different resources and has been successful for me.*

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# Regardless to what you read, Remember this:

*The best time to go fishing is whenever you can go  
and  
The best place to fish is where the fish are.*

*There are tips throughout this site that I hope will make everyone's experience last a lifetime.*



or

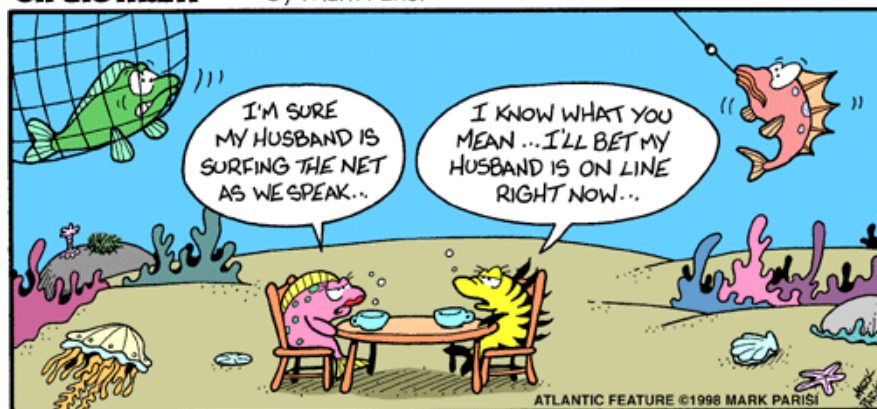
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**off the mark**

by Mark Parisi

www.offthemark.com



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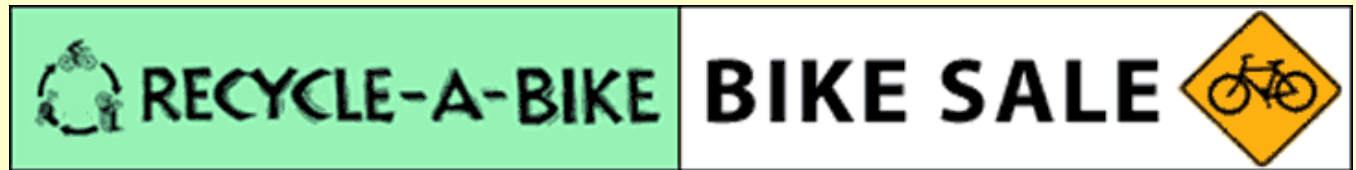
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## Camping and Fishing and Kids

Camping and fishing go together like peanut butter and jelly.

So, if you're planning your first fishing adventure with young children this summer while Camping then here are a few tips that I hope make everyone's experience last a lifetime.

### *Some simple tips:*

First:

Do keep it simple for starters, and that's your best bet for a fun day.

### **HAVE FUN!**

Don't worry about technique and don't be concerned about catching lots of big, trophy-size fish. To a young angler, a small bluegill or crappie caught with a simple hook and bobber is a major achievement. *For some children, a big fish might be scary.*

Many campgrounds are situated on lakes or ponds or at least have a local fishing hole nearby that holds panfish.

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*Panfish are pretty much your garden-variety sunny-bluegill deal.*



*These fish will eat nearly 24-7. A worm and bobber combination is about all you need. We'll get into specific equipment a little later.*

**What you need to bring is a heap of patience,** because kids have never even heard of the word.

Don't force your child to fish for hours on end.

Sometimes a child will be happy fishing for 15 minutes and then playing for an hour along the beach or woods, etc.

A child cannot be expected to spend long hours sitting and holding a rod. As the adult you should also not plan to spend long hours paying attention to his or her rod without keeping an eye on the kids.

Even so, there are ways to keep the children involved in fishing and enjoying the outdoors in general.

One way to keep the tyke focused is to let him or her do as much as possible, keep them involved, explain the gear, the procedures, show them how things work...promise a special treat on the way back to camp or explain how you're going to show the folks back at the campsite how to cook fish.

Another method is to fish for a very catchable species at a good time of year. Spring fishing for bluegill or crappie is a particularly good way to introduce children to fishing, because there can be lots of action, which is more fun and interesting for the child.

Often children want to be able to move the rod around a lot and see how things look and work when they're underwater. There's nothing wrong with letting them do that, as long as they're not swinging the rod around and hooking each other. Children that want to bounce the rod around can be successful

using small jigs for panfish, since the fish will often strike jigs worked in an erratic, vertical manner. Some anglers have their children catch baitfish for them, including threadfin shad, using a small golden egg hook with a red bead on it by jigging it over the side of the boat.

Bigger children often enjoy casting and retrieving lures, especially spinners and topwater lures. If the only fishing available requires leaving a rod still with a baited hook, use rod holders and bells, so the kids don't have to be sitting still and chained to the rod. Sure, they'll miss a few fish, but the excitement of a ringing bell alerting them that a fish is interested in their bait will usually renew their interest.

Another way to keep children interested is to have a friendly competition with a very simple prize. Perhaps the person who catches the first or largest fish should get the first or biggest candy bar or other snack. Even without a prize, a child can feel pretty excited if he or she can catch a fish before (or a bigger fish than) dad, mom, grandpa or another adult. The competition can be for the first fish of the day, the biggest of the day, the first of each species, the biggest of each species, the first full stringer, the most fish total or the most of a particular species. There can even be a competition for the person who catches the most unusual or strangest-looking fish.

The BEST way to help children enjoy fishing is to plan a trip that involves more activities than just fishing, **such as** Camping, hiking, swimming, boating, canoeing, water-skiing, horseback riding or bicycle riding. This keeps the children in the great outdoors, learning about and enjoying the natural world around them, and fulfills both their enthusiasm and their short attention



spans.

Some activities can even be combined with fishing. For example, fishing can be combined with snorkeling to add a whole new dimension.

### **KEEP IT SIMPLE**

Don't make your fishing outing a big production. Kids can only take in so much information at any given time. The more complicated you make it, the more frustrated they'll get. You don't need fancy equipment. You don't need a boat; fishing from a pier, dock or shore will do just fine. Keep it simple. After all, your child just wants to spend time with you.

**As far as equipment goes, it need not be expensive.**

A basic spin-cast system, the push-button variety, is easy for kids to operate.

The old Zebco "capsule" reels taught many of us how to cast.

Do not go for an open-faced spinning reel  
or  
baitcasting reel for first-timers.

***Note: open-faced models go on the bottom of the reel seat, not the top.***

Nowadays, you can find ready-to-go outfits in most major sporting goods stores that are made specifically for kids.

On that note, stick to the perch, bluegills, and sunnies for starters.

The occasional bass will be a bonus.

However, if you do want the youngster to get into decent fish, try a pay-to-fish commercial outfit.

Check the Internet or ads in local fishing publications. Nearly every state, or at least region, produces local magazines for anglers, and these people do advertise. The basic deal is that you pay an

entry fee and so much per pound for fish caught. The upside is that you know the fish are there, the downside is that it ain't the real world. But if it's only a day-trip fun deal, it couldn't hurt much.

For saltwater excursions, hopping on a family-friendly party boat is a smart idea. The captains are in business to make people happy, and if it's a boatload of kids, some simple bottom fishing, not far from shore is just the ticket. Don't take a five-year-old out in search of mako shark or 12-pound bluefish when a few sea robins will make him or her happy.

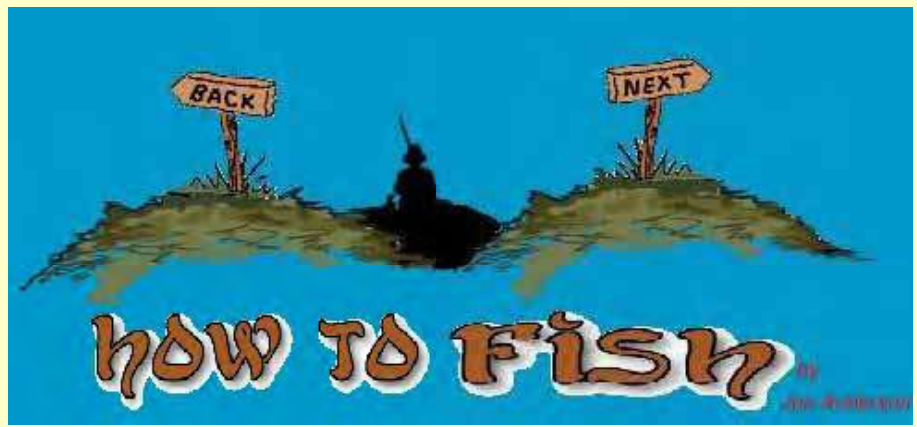
Finally, be encouraging, supportive, take pictures and laugh a lot.

Help with the line tangles, netting their catch, and the like. But otherwise, let them have fun on their own. It'll work wonders for a "quality time" experience - and your blood pressure.

**Despite all the planning, kids will be kids and they'll be too interested in the outdoors to focus on just fishing for hours on end.**

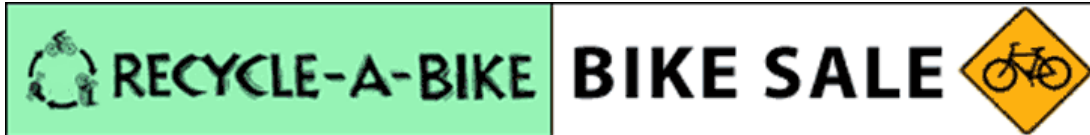
**As long as they're having good, safe fun with a little fishing thrown in here and there, the children will be building good memories and good experiences that will boost their self esteem, their love for the outdoors and most of all the family's unity.**

**What you'll need to get started . . .**



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## Equipment Needed

Though fishing can become complicated with fancy lures, expensive reels, shiny boats, water-depth finders, and all sorts of other gadgets, all you really need to fish is a pole, some line, a sinker, a bobber, a hook, and some bait (*all referred to as tackle*).

## Basic freshwater Fishing

for sunfish or panfish.

This type of fishing doesn't require a tackle box the size of a transport, nor do you need any type of degree.

You need only a rod and reel, line, a bobber and hooks, just like in the good old days.

The only bait you really need are worms!

(or perhaps grubs, plastic worms, corn, bread or bits of hot dog for bait)

Worms can be caught on a dewy night using only a flashlight and a tin can that has a bit of grass and soil in it. This keeps the worms alive.

*They can be kept outside or in the refrigerator if it is especially warm. If you place worms in the refrigerator, be sure to put a waxed paper over the top, fasten it with an elastic and poke a few small holes in the paper to ensure the worms have oxygen. If possible, allow your child to help catch the worms. That is part of the fun.*

So, let's organize what we need for a simple and successful fishing trip to your local pond.

Your line should be as light and inconspicuous as possible so that it does not frighten fish from your bait.

However, it must be strong enough to hold the fish you want to catch!

Before you can fish and you are over the age of 18  
**you will need a fishing license!**

**Be sure to purchase proper licenses!!!**  
In most states, licenses aren't required for children.

You'll also want to know the basic fishing laws and few simple things about [where fish live, what they eat, and when they are hungry.](#)

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## Equipment

### Youth Fishing Kits

They come with either closed face or open faced spinning reels, a rod, line, and one even had a small supply of artificial baits.

Add a small tackle box, some split shots, a couple of bass sinkers and supply of small hooks and your in business.

Total cost roughly \$25- \$30.

*This equipment, when shown the proper care, will last for years.*

Lets look at some of the major parts when it comes to shopping for a rod.

The 3 main parts are:

[Guides](#)

[Grip/Handle](#)

[Reel seat](#)

**Guides-** The ceramic o-ring looking holes that are attached to the rod are called guides.



The line is fed from the reel through the all the guides and then to the bait. Typically, they're attached using either thread, or tape. One more thing about guides, check them periodically to make sure they aren't chipped or cracked. Guides that are damaged can ruin your line.

If you do find a guide that is damaged, it can be simply replaced by using a Rod Tip Repair Kit.

**DO NOT CUT THE TIP OF YOUR ROD OFF!!!**

Take a cigarette lighter and as you heat the metal of the tip (do not put the flame on the rod just the metal of the tip)pull on the tip (with needle nose pliers) as you heat it up. This will melt the glue holding the tip on and the tip will pull off.

Most of your fish and tackle stores sales a rod tip repair kit with glue and various sizes of rod tips. The kit also gives instructions on how to take off the old tip and put the new one on.

**Grip/Handle** This is where you hold the rod. Typically, grips come in either cork or foam. Try them both and choose the one that is most comfortable. Handles come in various lengths. Be sure to consider the length of the handle and find one you like and is also comfortable.

**Reel seat-** This is where the reel is attached.



Simply place the reel into the reel seat and hand tighten (no tools are needed).  
The reel is now attached.

***Be sure not to over tighten!***

### **What is a ferrule?**

Manufacturers make various kinds of fishing rods. Some of them are a single piece, others are made up of two or more pieces that have to be assembled. To assemble the rod, connect the male and female ends together making sure the guides are lined up. This male- female connection is called a ferrule. With two piece rods, the ferrule is typically located in the middle of the rod and is covered by a piece of tape. Regardless of where the ferrule is, the connection is very simple. The pieces just slide together. You should be able to assemble the rod in under a minute.

You shouldn't need any type of lubricant. But, occasionally it may be necessary.

Use your skin as lubricant.

Rub the male end against the side of your nose.

You should not use any type of commercial grade lubricant to help make the connection. When you're done connecting the pieces together, make sure the guides are lined up. If not, simply twist one of the pieces until they're in line with each other.

### **Action**

As you shop for a rod, I encourage you to hold and even slightly bend it. Get the feel of it. Notice how the rod feels in your hand. Does it feel comfortable? How does it feel when you cast? Be sure to find a rod you like and is comfortable. Remember, you'll be using it for a long time. One of the things you'll notice pretty quick is the rods' flexibility. This flexibility is called action. You'll know what type of action the rod has by looking at the information listed on the rod by the handle. Actions are typically defined as:

**Ultra light** - Typically used for Panfish such as Crappie and Bluegill

**Light** - Typically used for Perch

**Medium** - Can be used for Bass and Walleye and many other species of fish

**Medium Heavy** - Typically used for larger fish or used when casting larger baits

**Heavy** - Typically used for larger fish and larger baits

The more flexible the rod is, the more action it has. For example, there is more action (flexibility) in an Ultra light rod than there is in a Heavy action one. If you had to choose one action to use general, I'd suggest the Medium action because of it's overall versatility.

*One more note about shopping for a rod, stick to the major manufactures such as Berkley, Shakespeare, Daiwa, Shimano, just to name a few. These companies have been around for a number of years and can be trusted. You won't go wrong buying from a major manufacture.*

**Pole- Almost any type will work.**

In order to be most effective, almost all of the artificial lures should be used on certain kinds of store-bought fishing rods with reels attached. There are bait-casting rods for bait and plugs, fly rods for artificial flies and poppers, and spinning rods for spoons, jigs, and spinners. Different types of reels are made for each of these rods, but all of them hold a spool of line and allow the lure to be cast out into the water and reeled back in.

**Rod-** Almost any type will work. The basic fishing rod is 6 feet long and has a medium "weight" (which means it's a good all-purpose rod). A cane pole or even a long stick will work for crappies and sunfish.

A fishing rod is a long, straight, flexible pole that an angler uses to cast bait or lures into the water. Fishing rods can be made of bamboo, fiberglass, or graphite. Bamboo rods range from inexpensive cane poles without reels to finely handcrafted fly-fishing rods. Fiberglass rods are the most popular rods with beginners. They are relatively inexpensive, not easily broken, and require little maintenance. Graphite has become a popular rod material for experienced anglers because it is extremely light yet strong.

Rod length depends upon the fishing an angler intends to do-not only the type of game fish sought after, but also the type of water and the surrounding landscape. Short, flexible rods are often used in locations where overhanging tree limbs and branches limit an angler's casting area. Long, wispy rods up to 4 m (12 ft) in length may be used for long casts in moderate winds. Shorter, sturdier rods are used for pulling heavy game fish from the depths of large lakes or the ocean. The diameter of the rod determines its flexibility, which is the measure of how far it can bend without breaking when a fish is fighting hard. Thicker and stronger rods are used for bigger, more aggressive fish that would break medium and small rods.

The rod has a grip or handle made of high-quality cork or foam. Several small metal rings called ferrules are attached to the rod from the handle to the tip, including one on the very tip of the rod. These ferrules serve as guides for the fishing line. They help the line flow smoothly when the angler casts and retrieves, and the last guide helps control the direction of casts. Most rods also have a reel seat that secures the reel onto the rod near the grip.

***Let's talk about the differences between casting and spinning rods.***

**Spinning rods**



Only a [Spinning](#) (open face) style reel can be used.

Notice the reel sits on the underside of the rod.

The guides point to the ground

The size of the eyelets start large and become smaller closer to the tip.

**Casting rods**

Either [Spincast](#) or [Baitcast](#) reels can be used

The guides and reel sit on top of the rod

Many types of casting rods have a style of grip called a Trigger Grip.

It'll help you determine where to hold the rod. Simply, place your forefinger around the grip to hold it.

*Both rods come in a variety of sizes and actions.*

*Chose the one that best suites your needs.*

**What the rod does**

The rod's job is to take tension off the line. When fighting a fish, you want the rod to partially bend, so it'll take some of the tension off the line. This is good, because if there was no transfer of tension, the line would break.

If you use a rod that isn't stiff enough, the rod will bend, but too much. When a rod bends as far as it can, the rod can't handle any more tension from the line. Something has to give, either the fish, rod or line.

If you use too heavy of a rod, the tension isn't transferred because there isn't enough force being applied by the fish. This puts all the tension on just the line. Once again something has to give; in this case it's either the fish or the line.

Using the right rod is important because it enables the rod to bend but not too much, absorbing the tension from the line, allowing you to fight the fish and win.

Shopping for a rod and understanding it how it works will be vital to your success as a fisherman. As you can see, it's not difficult at all.

**Reel-** The easiest ones to use and called spin-cast reels. Spinning reels are popular, but they are a bit harder to use.

*If you use a cane pole or a stick, just tie the line to the end.*

*Fishing reels store line on a spool. An adjustable friction device inside the reel (known as a drag) helps the angler fight a fish. The drag creates tension on the line as it is pulled off the reel spool. When the fish pulls line off the reel, the constant tension tires it and keeps the line in order. Without a drag system, the fish would take out too much line, causing the line to tangle. The opposite situation-not releasing any line from the reel-would cause the line to snap. Most reels have adjustable drag settings depending upon the fish an angler wants to catch. Anglers can also disengage the drag to cast or do anything else that requires the line to release easily.*

*Reels are made in four basic categories: bait casting, spinning, spin casting, and fly.*

**Bait casting reels** have a covered frame and a revolving, horizontal spool that winds in line when the handle is turned. One turn revolves the spool four or five times, bringing in several feet of line quickly.



Bait- Cast  
Reel  
[Click On Image  
For More Detailed Information](#)

**Spinning reels** have a stationary spool set on the underside of the rod. A curved bar, or bail, acts as a guide on the outer lip of the spool. As the reel handle is turned, the bail also turns, winding line neatly onto the spool.



Spinning  
Reel  
[Click On Image  
For More Detailed Information](#)

A variation of the spinning reel is the **spin casting, or closed-face, reel**. The spin casting reel has a cover over the spool and a hole through which line passes. This construction keeps the line clean and out of the angler's way. There is no bail inside of a spin casting reel. Instead, metal teeth attached to the spool gather the line in neatly.





[Click On Image  
For More Detailed Information](#)

*Fly reels, which have few moving parts, are the most basic form of fishing reels. Most consist of a frame that holds a narrow revolving spool. The handle attaches directly to the spool and turns the spool one rotation at a time.*

[Click Here to learn more about  
Rods & Reels](#)

### **Fishing Line**

*As you stroll down the fishing aisles, there are many different types of line to choose from, and it can be very confusing to say the least. Hopefully after reading this, you'll have a good understanding of fishing line.*

*Most fishing line is made of nylon and is called "monofilament," or mono for short. It comes on spools of various lengths that are called "tests." Usually, a four-pound test line will hold up a fish weighing four pounds without breaking. The larger the test of the line, the thicker the diameter it is and the more it will hold. For your basic rig, try to find a piece of four-pound or six-pound test line that is eight to ten feet long.  
Tie the line onto the end of your pole.  
Now you're making progress!*

Fishing line can be a complicated subject, but it doesn't have to be.

[Let's start with a basic rule in mind:](#)

When you're buying line or any equipment, match the gear to the conditions your fishing. With that said, you'll need to find out a few things before purchasing line.

What kind of fish are you after?

Are you after small ones such as Crappie, Perch or Bluegill ?

Or maybe you want a bigger fish such as Bass or maybe you after the ones with big teeth such as Walleye or Pike.

What is the body of water like?

Does it have large amounts of vegetation, rocks etc?

With regards to this question, you may not know so you'll have to do some investigating, Still unsure? Then stick to a general fishing line from a major manufacturer, and you should be O.K.

By answering these questions you start matching equipment to the conditions. For example, if the body of water you want to fish on has lots of weeds, you will need a stronger line to get your bait through the weeds because a weaker line may break.

I tried to break them down into three basic categories. These are my own categories, some purists might argue with us, but we like to keep things simple.

### **[A short introduction to the types of line](#)**

**Monofilament**  
(Also called mono)

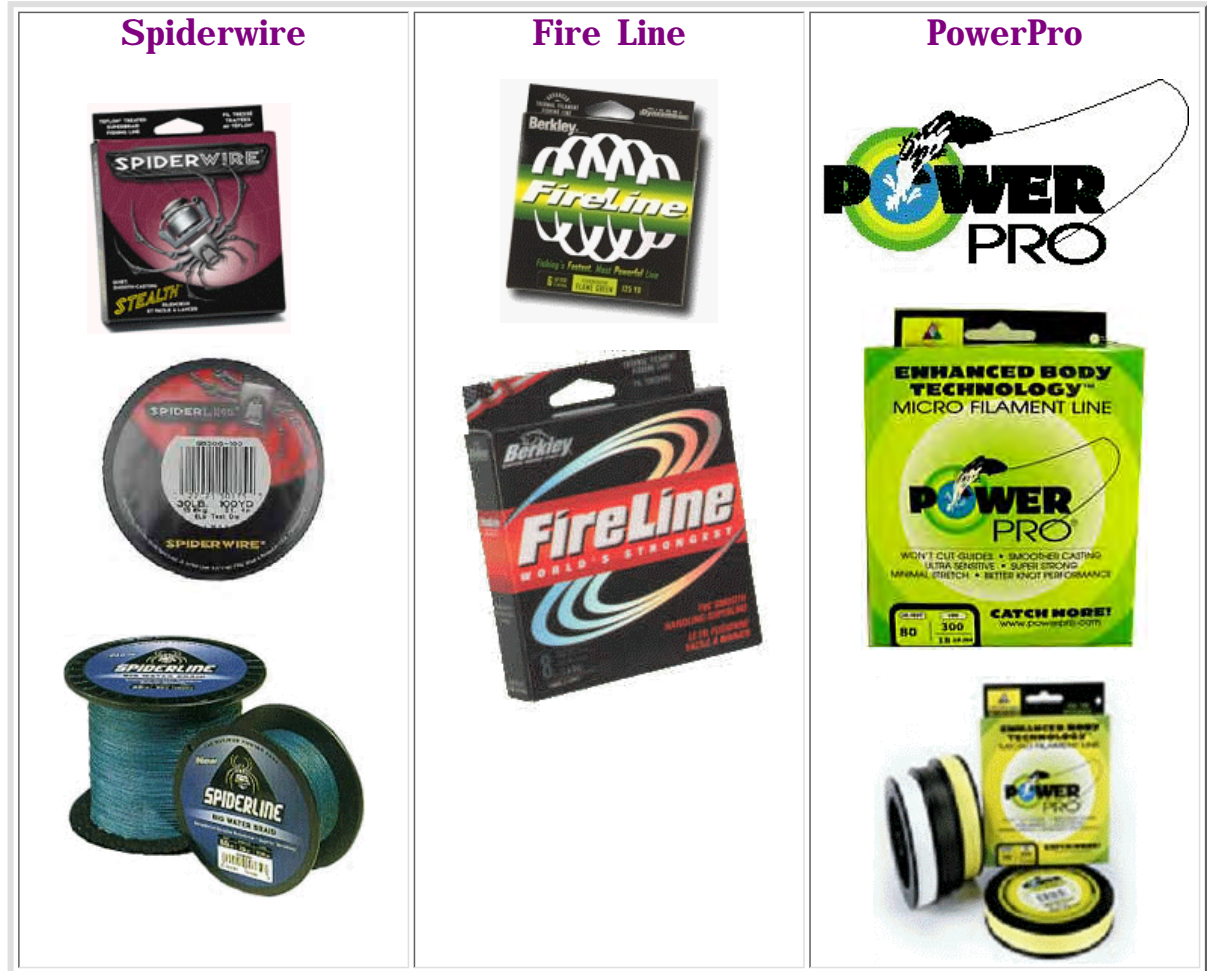


It's the most common type of line, and typically it comes in either clear or green. If you buy a pre-spoiled reel, chances are it was spooled with this type of line. One thing to keep in mind is memory. When line is uncoiled (by casting) it tries to maintain the shape of the spool. This coiling after the cast is Memory. It will wreak havoc on you in the form of not being able to cast, tangles, pure frustration etc. To avoid this, be sure to re-spool your line at least once a year. Monofilament is a great all purpose fishing line that can be used anywhere..

*Monofilament is listed on the package, by terms such as mono or monofilament.*

## Super lines

These include Fusion and Braided type lines. Some of the more common ones are:



In this case, the materials are either braided or fused together to make a single strand of line. What's produced by the process, is a super strong line with a much smaller diameter than it's monofilament competitor. For example, if you were to purchase a 12 lb test monofilament line, the diameter would be listed. With super lines, the package might list 24 lb test line with 12 lb diameter. These lines tend to be more sensitive and have little or no stretch to them. We suggest using this type of line when you're going to be fishing heavy cover, or going after fish with big teeth. What's the downside you ask? You'll have to try it and see. We will say don't wrap it around your finger or hand while pulling on it. It'll cut into you. Take it from experience!

*Listed on the box, you'll see such terms as "fusion", "braided", "ultra sensitive", or "minimal stretch".*

## Fluorocarbons

*These lines look like monofilament but, are virtually invisible underwater. They have very little stretch which can lead to better hooksets. This type of line is best suited for the same conditions as monofilament.*

*Berkley's Vanish is an example of a Fluorocarbon line.*



*These types of lines do well in clear water and when there is heavy fishing pressure.*

*When it comes to comparing Monofilament to Fluorocarbon line:*

- Fluorocarbon has less stretch**
- Has increased abrasion resistance**
- Sinks faster than monofilament**
- Doesn't absorb water, therefore it retains 100% of it's dry tensile strength**
- Is virtually invisible under water**

Now that you know a little about the different types of line, the fishing conditions and what you're after, it's time to tackle the label. Listed below are several of the more common features that show up on the boxes of fishing line.

### Understanding what the terms mean

#### Test Strength

This is the breaking strength of the line. Meaning, with how much force does the fish fight with before the line breaks. You'll see this listed right on the front of the box. This seems to be the first thing people think about when choosing a line. The label will say something like 12 LB Test or 6 LB Test. The larger the number, the stronger the line.

Oh, one more thing, test strength has nothing to do with the weight of the fish, only the amount of the fight.

When fighting a fish, make sure your rod tip is up and that the rod is slightly bent. When the rod is bent, the force of the fight is being transferred from the line to the rod. This is one reason people land big fish on light line. The object is to keep the fish's head up and the line taut. We don't want to get ahead of ourselves, if you haven't already seen the page how to fight a fish, [click here](#) after you're finished with this article.

#### Diameter

Is the thickness of the line. It affects the running depth of your lure. Remember, as you work your lure, you're also moving water at the same time. The larger the diameter, the more water is being moved. A thicker line moves more water than a thinner line. This means that your bait will actually run deeper with thinner line!

Diameter also relates to how much of a particular line your reel can hold. To learn about reels, [click here](#).

#### Stretch

Stretch is primarily meant for monofilament. If the line doesn't stretch, it will break. Super lines have minimal or no stretch, but typically don't break when fighting fish. They're so strong fish will break before the line does

The label will include terms like "*Low Stretch*", "*Controlled Stretch*" or "*Minimal Stretch*".

#### Abrasion Resistance

How tough is it? Can it withstand being dragged over rocks, stumps, bitten by fish and not break?

Words on the package might be "*High Abrasion Resistance*" "*Extra Tough*".

Unless you're going to be fishing heavy cover, such as rocks and submerged tree stumps, don't let abrasion resistance factor into your decision about what line to purchase.

#### Knot strength

Knots weaken the line, because the line is wrapped back on itself and tightened down. Certain knots can decrease line strength.

To learn how to tie some of the more common knots, [click here](#).

Advertising on the package will include terms such as "*Superior Knot Strength*"

Last but not least, stick to the major brands.

Brands such as Berkley, Spiderwire, and Stren.

You may pay more, but it's worth it. You've already spent hard earned money purchasing your reel, and possibly even your rod, why try to save money on the most important piece of equipment? The piece that connects you to the fish!

As you can see, there are many types of line on the market to choose from. Ultimately, you have to decide what is important for your type of fishing, is it test strength, stretch or another factor? We've said it before, and we'll say it again. When you're buying line or any equipment, match the gear to the conditions your fishing. No one line is the "right" line for all types of fishing. You may have to experiment with several lines to find the one you like best.

## Bait & Lures

**Bait**- Bait is what you put on the end of your line to attract the fish, something a fish would love to eat. Just like people, all fish are not attracted to the same foods. Some baits work better than others for certain types of fish.

[\(see the fish food charts here\)](#)

Bait can be broken down into two major types:

- 1) live or natural bait,  
and
- 2) artificial bait and lures.

### Live and Natural Bait

There are a number of living creatures that many fish like to eat. For most fish, the best all-around baits are nightcrawlers, and half a nightcrawler, or worms - these include earthworms.

Earthworms are one of the most widely used forms of real bait. They can be used to catch almost any type of fish.

As a general rule when using worms, be sure to match the size of the worm to the size of the fish you're after. When going after small ones such as, Crappie or Bluegill, (sometimes called panfish) you'll want to use a small worm or even just a portion of a large one. Worms can easily be cut into pieces with a pocket knife. Be sure to put the unused portion back in the container, so it'll stay alive.

When fishing for larger fish such as Bass or Walleye, you should be using large worms, just be sure not to overload your hook. Remember, you want to give them a taste not the whole meal.

If possible, we suggest buying your worms at a tackle shop close to where you're going to be fishing.

Let's talk about storage for a moment. If you're fishing for the day, use the container they came in, keep them in a cool dry place and be sure not to keep them more than a couple of days. If you want to keep them more than a couple of days or want a quality container use a worm box.



Frabill © Lil' Fisherman Worm Box

Insulated poly-foam worm box has dual fliptop lids for easy access to top or bottom. Holds 1-2 dozen crawlers. Includes bedding.

Minnows are probably the 2nd most popular type of real bait. They come in 3 sizes, small medium and large (also called chubs). Like worms, you have to match the size of the minnow to the size of the fish.

Minnows can be attached to a hook various ways:

Through the back in front of the dorsal fin and above the horizontal line

Through the lips (upside down) the minnow will try to "right" itself thus attracting fish with its movements.

Put the hook in the mouth and bring it out the gills trying not to cause any damage. Turn the hook over so it faces the minnow and insert the hook into the minnow above the horizontal stripe.

The minnow will try to "right" itself.

[Click here](#) to see how to hook other live baits

Storage can be an issue with minnows but, you have a couple of options. First, if you plan on fishing for an entire day, keep them stored in a minnow bucket.



850 Bait Bucket

Bucket is designed to stay in water while trolling to keep minnows fresh and alive. Secure bait door and built in handle. Yellow. 10.75" W x 8.5"D x 14.5"H.

Fill the bucket with lake water. Be sure to change the water at least every hour to keep the fish alive.

If you plan on fishing for a few days, you may want to bring along one or several minnow traps.



Economy Minnow Trap

Efficient, durable and easy to operate. Black vinyl coating blends in with underwater colors, providing superb camouflage. 1/4" mesh.

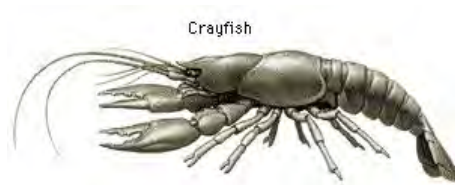
Minnow traps are designed to be submerged, and be attached to the dock or some other form of structure. The purpose of the trap is to catch minnows. We've found, if you cover the ends of the trap and put your minnows in the trap, they store just fine. Each morning, simply raise the trap, take the amount of minnows you'll need and put them in the minnow bucket (be sure to put water in the bucket first), secure the minnow trap, and put it back in the water. Minnows can die quickly so be sure to keep an eye on them and use dead ones first.

You may want to consider buying large (chub) minnows when going after small fish. You can cut the chub into 3-4 smaller pieces. That's 36-48 pieces for a dozen chubs compared to what you might pay for a dozen small minnows.

Live bait can be delicate.

I do not suggest casting and retrieving it like you would an artificial lure. Rather, fish it with a bobber or as bait on a rig (see the section for the [basics on rigs](#))

Fish also like crickets, grasshoppers, and cray-fish. All of these baits can be gathered for free. Worms can be dug in your garden, grasshoppers collected in grassy fields, crickets found in dark corners in the basement, crayfish found under rocks in small creeks, and minnows seined or caught in a minnow trap at a local pond.



**Crappie:** Minnows  
**White Bass:** Minnows  
**Sunfish:** Worms  
**Black Bass:** Worms  
**Catfish:** Worms or Stinkbait  
**Sunfish:** Crickets  
**Trout:** Salmon eggs

Waxworms work well for sunfish. To catch carp, try a kernel of canned corn. Catfish are partial to a piece of turkey liver.

Minnows are great fish-getters. Try tiny (1-inch-long) minnows for crappies and larger (2-to 6-inch-long) sucker and fathead minnows for walleyes and northern pike.

If you don't know what type of minnow to use, just ask the person selling the bait.

*Take along a needle-nosed pliers to remove the hook from the mouth of any fish you catch.*

**Note:** *Worms, minnows, and nightcrawlers die easily, and when dead they will no longer attract fish.*

Keep worms and nightcrawlers in a cool, moist place, out of the sun. Put minnows in a bucket with a few small holes punched in the sides and keep it in shaded water nearby. To keep water from spilling out, transport the bait bucket in a larger bucket.

#### **Other Natural Baits**

Other natural baits include corn kernels, pieces of hot dog, rnarshmallows, salmon eggs, cheese, and dough balls. Most of these can be found in your pantry or made from ingredients you have there. Salmon eggs can be purchased at a bait and tackle store. Not too many

marshmallows grow in nature, but for some reason certain types of fish like them!

All of these natural baits can be used with your homemade fishing pole. Choose your bait based on the type of fish you are trying to catch ([see the fish food charts here](#)). Put the bait on your hook, toss it into the water, and wait for the fish to bite. If you just can't decide which bait to use, a worm is always a good bet for most types of fish.

### Artificial Bait and Lures

In fishing lingo, artificial bait is usually called a lure.

If you've ever wandered down the fishing aisles, you'll know there are literally hundreds to choose from. I just want to give you just the basics. These are ones that should be in every tackle box. We think this will give you a good starting point.

Some lures closely imitate living creatures such as worms, flies, frogs, and minnows. Other lures attract fish by their movement and their sound or by tempting the fish's curiosity.

Artificial lures are designed to look and move like something a fish would eat, namely worms, minnows, grasshoppers, flies and other tasty morsels.

There are hundreds of different types of artificial lures, but many come under the basic categories of [Crankbaits](#), [plugs](#), [poppers](#), [spoons](#), [jigs](#), or [spinners](#).

There is no doubt you'll be dazzled by the variety!

There are even holographic lures that flash a 3-D view of scales or a small school of baitfish! But don't let your piggy bank go broke.

Practice restraint or soon you'll need a tackle box bigger than your boat! Start with a few carefully chosen lures to entice your favorite fish species and learn to use them well.

**Plugs** are designed to look something like a small fish. Some are made to float and some are made to dive down into the water. They shimmy, shake, gurgle, and splash in various ways to imitate something a hungry fish would like to eat.



**Poppers** imitate bugs floating on the surface of the water. When twitched along, they make a sort of "glub" sound that attracts certain kinds of fish.



**Spoons** look something like the eating end of a teaspoon. They are heavier than water, and imitate a speedy minnow flashing and darting under the surface as they are reeled in.



Spoons are mostly used for northern pike and muskies.

Of the hundreds of lures on the market, the most popular are *spinners* (such as Mepps or Rooster Tails), *crankbaits* (such as Rapalas), and *jigs* with feathers or rubber bodies (such as Mister Twisters).

**Spinners** have small blades or propellers that rotate around a center shaft. When you drag a spinner through the water, the blade spins and flashes, attracting fish by the motion it makes and the vibrations it sends into the water.



They are easy to use and will catch a wide variety of fish.

Use spinnerbaits with the lightest, brightest and shiniest blades on clear days and dark finishes on dull days or dingy waters.

**Jig**- This is simply small hooks with a lead ball near the eye of the hook. They are often decorated with feathers, artificial eyes, rubber legs, and tinsel. They are cast into the water and "jigged," or bounced up and down, to attract the fish. Retrieve a jig by bouncing it along the bottom of the lake or river.



**Note:** There are now alternatives to jigs. These alternatives are usually made of steel, ceramic or cement. If you loose your sinker, these alternatives are safer for water birds.



**Crankbaits**- More expensive than other lures, crankbaits are excellent for walleyes, pike, muskie, and bass.



These are lures that look like a small fish. They are cast into the water and retrieved by reeling (aka cranking) the line back in. There are 3 types: those that work the surface, medium divers (1-10 feet) and deep divers (10-20 feet)

As a general rule, you can tell a deep diver from a shallow one by the size of the lip. The larger the lip, the deeper it will dive. This rule is, however not set in stone.

### Surface lures



Typically the face is pushed in to form a cup. The cup creates a popping noise when the line is pulled instead of cranked in.

Some have a propeller instead of a "cup" face. The propeller moves the water around the lure to get the fish's attention.

Minnow baits. They may rattle, but don't have any movement built into them unless it's done by the fisherman pulling the line in various ways. There is no lip attached.

### Medium Divers

Appear to look the deep divers. Generally, I look at the lip size and the specs on the box to determine how deep it'll go

### Deep Divers

These are going down no more than 20 feet.

**Color** is important, because fish may be biting on red lures one day and yellows the next. This is why you need so many lures.

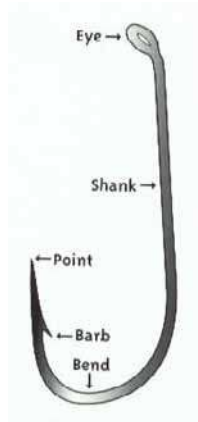
Colors on surface lures tend to be yellow- use on overcast days  
white- use on sunny days  
black- use for nights or dull days  
Weight Size (length) Jigs

## [Learn More about Lure Fishing](#)

**Hooks**- Fishing hooks come in all shapes and sizes. They are probably the most important part of your fishing equipment, but luckily they are not very expensive. It's a good idea to have a small assortment of hooks for various fishing situations.



A basic fishing hook is shaped like the letter "j" and is made up of several parts. They are called the eye, the shank, the bend, the barb, and the point.



The eye is where you tie the hook onto your line. The point is what you use to put on the bait, and what penetrates the mouth of the fish when it eats the bait. The barb is shaped such that after the hook goes into the fish's mouth, it won't easily come back out. Many people who are fishing just for fun (not for the frying pan) make what is known as a barbless hook. With a pair of pliers, they mash down the barb. Though you don't always land as many fish, these hooks are a lot more "fish friendly," and they make it much easier to release what you catch.

Generally, large hooks are for large fish and small hooks are for small fish. You should choose a hook appropriate for the weight of fish you will be trying to catch. You might begin with a size 4 or 6, but if you are going for the big fish, you might need something larger. An experienced fisherman friend can give you some help with this.

The point of your hook should be sharp, for good reason: so you can hook the fish! If it gets dull or a little rusty, it won't catch as many fish. Get a file and re-sharpen it.

Any type of hook will work.

The smaller the number, the larger the hook. Look for hooks in sizes 4-10. Hooks with a long "shank" (the part between the eye and the barb) are easier to remove from fish with small mouths, such as sunfish.

Use a hook that fits the mouth of the fish you want to catch. Size 8 and 10 hooks are best for crappies, sunfish, and carp. Size 4 and 6 are good for walleyes, catfish, and northern pike.

### Rigs

Rigs are a productive and easy way to catch many different species of fish.

We suggest 2 types of rigs:

Crappie Rigs

Bobber Rigs

Start by attaching the Crappie Rig



Double arms with fluorescent beads. Four popular gold Aberdeen hook sizes to choose from

to your main line, and add about a 1/2 ounce casting sinker



to the bottom of the rig.

Simply add a minnow or piece of worm to the hooks and drop it over the side. Let the rig sink to the bottom and take up the slack in the line so the rig will stand up straight.

### Bobber rigs

can be effective for Bluegill and are a great way to get kids started fishing.



any type will work for pan fish. First, figure out how deep you want your bait off



the bottom and tie the bobber stop knot on your line at that depth. Slip on the bobber stop bead and then the slip bobber and a hook. Put a good size split shot about a foot or two above it. Bait the hook and throw it all over the side. Make sure you have some slack in the line to allow the bobber to bounce up and down during a bite. You can fish a bobber rig next to the boat or toss it away from the boat. Bobber rigs work great if you want a relaxing day of fishing or for kids. If the bobber goes under water, set the hook, period. If the bobber continuously bounces a few times in a row, set the hook during the bounces. If after attempting to set the hook, you did not hook the fish, check the bait. If it's still there, get it back down quickly; the fish may still be interested. If the bait is gone, re-bait the hook and get it back in the water.

School is in session and a class maybe waiting for your worm to come on down!

### Sinkers

Sinkers are lead weights used to cast light lures and to drop the bait quickly to the bottom of the lake or river bottom, where most fish swim.

Used in together with bobbers, they hold the line at a given point.

Sinking lures and jigs don't need sinkers.

There are many different kinds of sinkers, split-shot; pencil and bullet are just a few of the types you can use.

Store-bought sinkers are usually made of lead and come in many different shapes, sizes, and weights.

The depth of the water and the speed of the current will determine how much weight you need to hold your bait in front of a hungry fish.

You will have to experiment with the size to get the float to set right.

Only use one weight, fish shouldn't see any more than they have to.

One easy sinker to use is called a split shot.



It is a small round piece of lead with a slit in it. To attach the sinker, just slide your line through the slit and squeeze the lead together.

Use your fingers or a pair of pliers, but **DON'T** use your teeth!

Besides the possibility of damaging your teeth,

**lead is poisonous**

and shouldn't be put into your mouth.

**Note:** *There are now alternatives to lead sinkers. These alternatives are usually made of steel, ceramic or cement. If you lose your sinker, these alternatives are safer for water birds.*

For most shore fishing, pinch on one or two small weights the size of a BB, about 10 inches up from your hook. Use only enough to sink the bait. If the fish feels too much weight it will drop the bait before you can set the hook.

Another kind of weight is called an egg sinker.



It is made of lead, shaped like a chicken egg, and has a hole through the middle. To use an egg sinker, run your line through the hole and place a split shot below the sinker to hold it in place. An egg sinker will attach more weight to the line, but when the fish takes your bait it won't feel the weight because the line slips through the sinker.

**More on SINKERS (weights)**

### **Bobber**

It could be called a float, bobber, cork, etc.

Bobber fishing is one of the first methods we all learn when starting to fish.

A sinker takes your bait to the desired depth in the water, and a bobber holds it at that level. It will allow you to adjust the depth of your hook wherever you want.

Bobbers let you know when you've got a nibble. Button, pencil and slip bobbers are a few of the types available. When you clamp the bobber on the line, remember that the distance from the sinker to the bobber should not be more than the depth of the water.

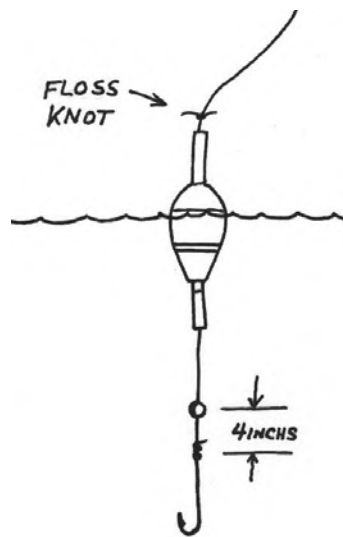
Bobbers come in various sizes to accommodate different sinkers and baits. They are usually made of red and white plastic and have a push-button spring attachment that makes moving them up and down your line easy.

Remember the smaller the better. Wind is your enemy in this case. If the float is too light, the wind will blow it back to you, too big and you will scare the fish off.



### **A Good Set Up of a Float**

A wooden float has a hole through the center so that it can slide up and down the line. Tie a piece of dental floss above the float so that the float will stop where you need it to. The float should set up straight with only the orange section out of the water.



From the hook to the weight is about 4 inches. From the weight to the knot is around 48 inches. You will want to experiment with this depth. Though it's set up to around 48 inches, it doesn't mean that you necessarily fish that deep. Use that to see how deep that you are. Try using a long pole with a reel, and this rig will most of the time just under the end of the pole.

When the float is in the water, the knot could be at any depth because the weight and hook are really hanging from the pole.

This set up will allow you to wind the tip of the pole all the way up to the hook when you get hung up under water. Once you have reeled up all of the line, you can punch it and normally the hook will break free.

Another advantage is the ability to throw it.

The float will slide to the weight and there is no wobble as everything goes through the air. When retrieving the rig from far away, the float will try to sit still in the water so that the hook and weight will almost come straight up. This helps to keep from getting hung up.

Try this trick,

remove the weight and floss and let the cricket float slowly down in a natural way. You will catch bigger fish especially if it can hit the bottom where the bigger ones feed.

The only problem here is that you sometimes have a fish and don't know.

More than often the small ones will get on your nerves.

### ***The bobber has a second benefit.***

When the bobber twitches in the water, you know a fish is nibbling at your bait. When it goes under the water, you know a fish is serious about eating the bait and it's time to "set the hook" (give the line a little jerk).

Usually the smaller and thinner bobbers work best. But don't use one so small that the weight and bait sink it. When the bobber goes under the water surface, you know that a fish has taken your bait. A bobber also adds weight to the line to help you cast farther.

### **bobber basics:**

*Use a bobber just big enough to float the bait and weight*

*Wait for the bobber to go under before setting the hook*

*Make the leader light enough so fish won't be spooked by it*

*Make the leader long enough not to spook the fish*

*Use a bait that sinks*

*Sharp hooks*

*Adjust bait level below bobber so its close to the bottom but not on it*

### **Swivels**

Another piece of tackle called a swivel comes in handy if you are using bait (like a minnow) or a lure (like a spinner) that has a twisting or turning action that tends to get your line twisted.

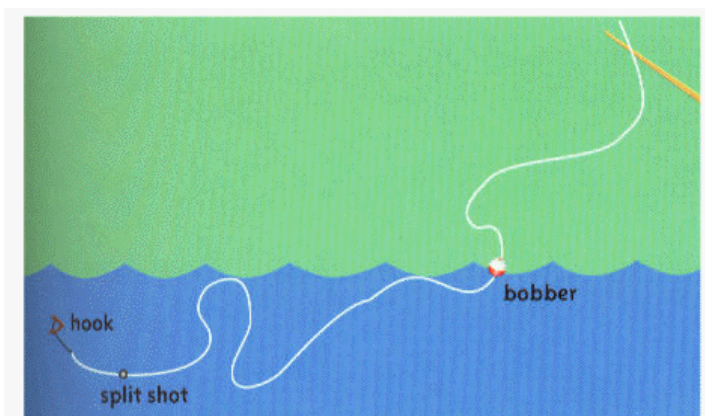
Tie a swivel between your bait and your line. This will allow the bait or lure to spin without

getting the line all tangled up. Swivels are inexpensive and come in various sizes to match the hooks and lures you might be using.

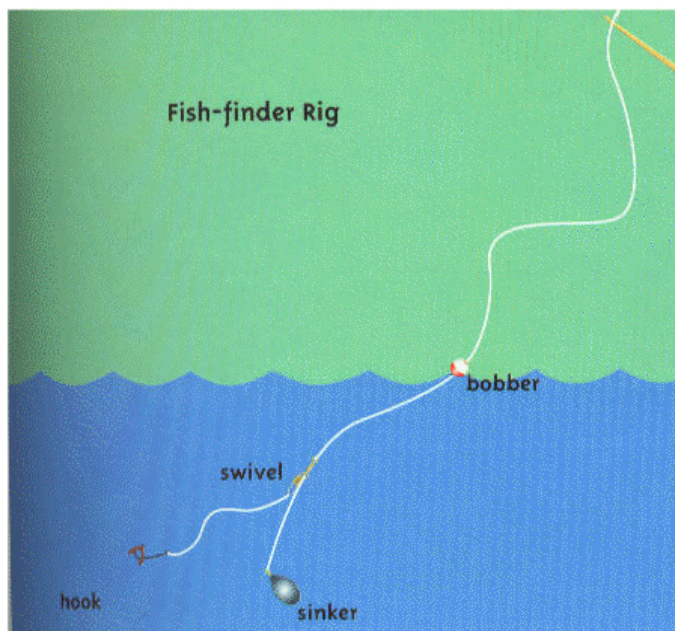


### Rigging Your Pole

All that's left now is to put your pieces of tackle together, put on your bait and go fishing! After you've tied your line onto the end of your pole, there are several ways to rig the other end. One way is to tie the hook onto the end of the line, come up several inches and squeeze on your sinker, and put your bobber on above that.



Another method, called a fish-finder rig, puts the weight at the bottom of the line with the hook tied off to the side on an extra piece of line. This kind of rig lets the bait float freely and naturally in the water (a better way to fool the fish) while the sinker holds it at the correct depth.



Once your pole is rigged, you'll need to decide [what kind of food to put on your hook to attract the fish.](#)

**[Look here!](#)**

## Now we need something to keep all this fish gear in . . .

**a Tacklebox** - Most any durable box with a tight lid and a handle will do the job! It could be an old toolbox or sewing box.

Most sporting stores and department stores sell tackle boxes in a variety of styles and sizes.








When considering what size tackle box you wish to buy,  
just remember,  
fishing is a lifelong pursuit.  
You will always be adding items to your fishing gear!

Well,  
that's about the basics as equipment needed for fishin'!

Then there's the broad category of other stuff:  
a net, a stringer to hold the catch, line clipper, filleting knife, first-aid  
kit, bait bucket, sun-glasses, a hat, lunch.  
And SNACKS.

### Tackle Box Checklist

 A variety of hooks	 Knife
 Hook remover (disgorger)	 Weights ( <i>various shapes and sizes</i> )
 Bobbers ( <i>various sizes and styles</i> )	 Band-aids ( <i>better yet, a first aid kit</i> ) 
 Lures	 Sunscreen ( <i>if needed</i> )
 Extra fishing line	 A spare reel wouldn't hurt
 Swivels	 Needle nose pliers

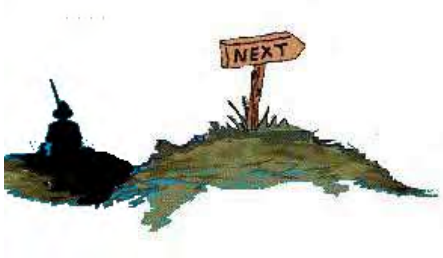
## One thing you *DO NOT* want to keep in your tackle box - is bait!

Trust me, the next time you go fishing,



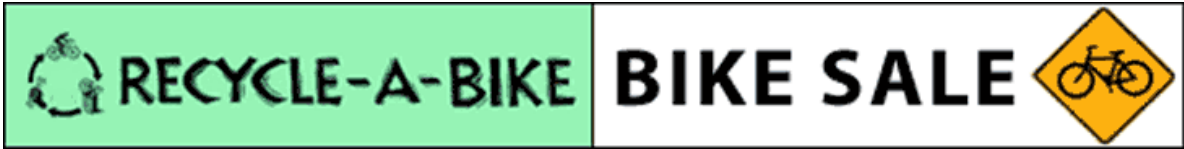
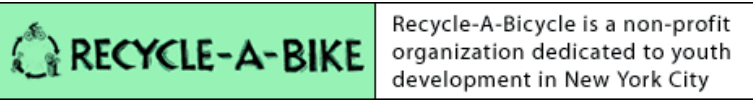
your tackle box will smell worse than dead fish itself!!!!

## [Read up on Tips for your equipment . . .](#)



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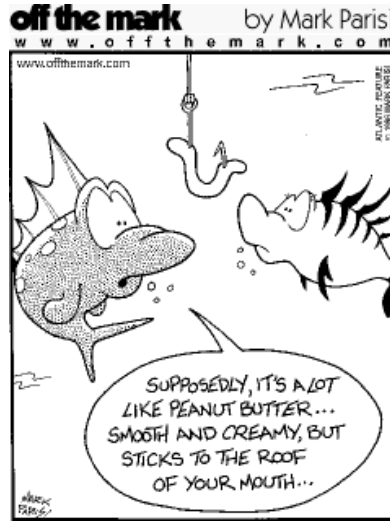
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How To **Bait Your Hook**

Live bait should always appear to the fish to be alive.



Once you put them on your hook they will eventually die, so you need to make them look like they are alive!

**When attaching the worm to the hook, you'll want to hook the worm more than once so it stays on the hook.**

**The less you handle the bait with your fingers, the more effective your bait will be.**

**Human hands have an amino acid that is an aversion scent to fish,**

**so the less of this you deposit on the bait through handling, the more effective your bait becomes.**

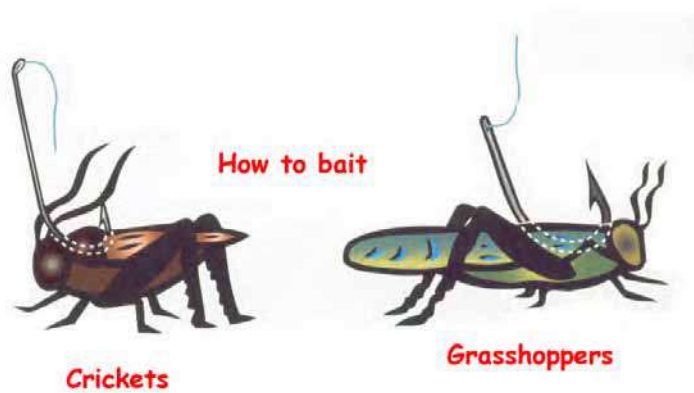
*There are small, syringe-like applicators that allow anglers to bait hooks without touching the bait at all*

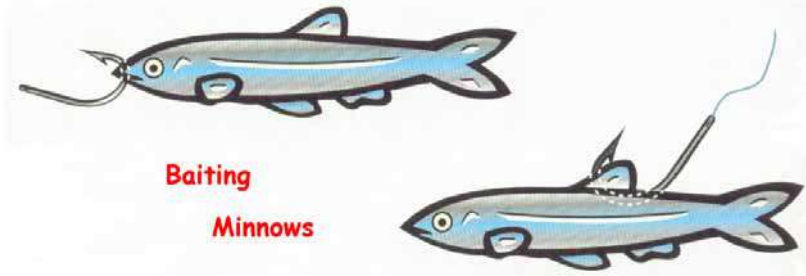
*or*

*you can use disposable sterile gloves (they're cheap).*



See the diagrams below to learn how to hook different types of live bait:

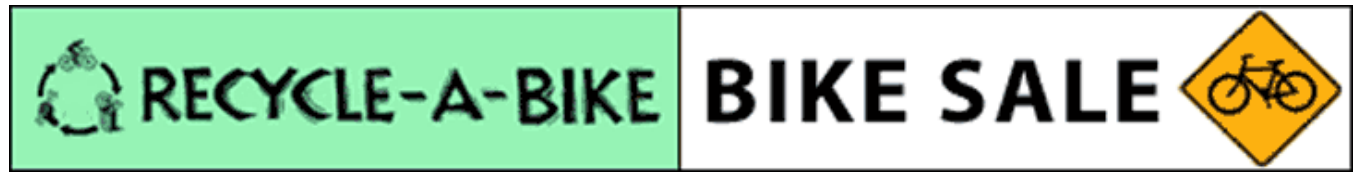
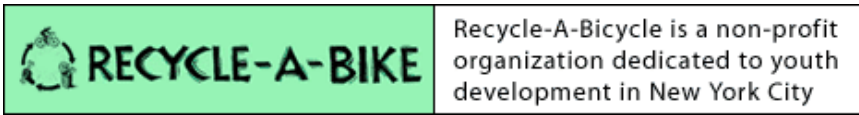




There are other methods of catching fish  
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# About Rods & Reels

## Reels

*A reel is the mechanical device mounted to the handle end of the fishing rod onto which the line is wound.*

*They come in three types (further defined below), with more speeds and ball bearings than most sane people know about, much less worry about.*

*The most important point - when you turn the handle, it must feel "smooth."*

*Price ranges from affordable to obscenely expensive.*

There's a wide variety of reels out there to choose from and there are quite a few manufacturers making them. They come in different sizes and shapes. Fishing wouldn't be very exciting if there weren't a wide variety of reels to fish with. You wouldn't want to reel in a Croaker with a 9/0 Penn big game reel, or try to catch a big "Smoker" Kingfish with a Zebco spin cast reel.

There are 3 types of reels that most fishermen use to catch fish. They are:

### Spincast Reel

*(Also known as a Closed Face reel)*

### Spinning Reel

*(Also known as a Open Face reel)*

### Bait Casting Reel

### Rods

### Conclusion

Even though each kind is different, all reels share some major components:

### **Spool**

This part of the reel holds the line. The spool is visible on the both the spinning and baitcast reels. On the spincast models, it's located under

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the cover. Spools vary in size and in the amount of line they can hold. As you look at each reel, you'll see a listing like, 12/160 or 8/250. This tells you how much of a certain pound test line the spool can hold. In the 2 examples, the spool can hold either 160 yards of 12 lb test or 250 yards of 8 lb test line.

### **Bail**

The bail has 2 settings, open or closed. It's the mechanism that either prevents or allows line coming off the spool.

An open bail allows line to come off the spool

A closed bail- prevents the spool from letting line out.

When casting your line, one of the things you do is open the bail. After the cast is completed, the bail is closed by turning the handle. Sometimes you'll hear the bail click after you've just turned the handle. This click is the bail closing and is normal.

### **Handle**

The handle is what's used to retrieve (*more commonly called crank*) the line back onto the spool.

### **Drag**

The object of drag is to allow the spool to slip before the line snaps. This slipping of the spool allows the fish more line and also prevents it from breaking. When fighting a fish, the rod does its job by absorbing the shock from the line. The rod and the drag work together to prevent the line from stretching and possibly breaking while fighting.

*Here's an example:* Small fish in open water - you can tighten down the drag and just crank the fish in with little worry the line may break. With a big fish in open water, you may want to lighten the drag to let the fish run and tire out. Therefore, with every fish you hook, you should be aware of the drag "setting" and the environment you hook them in.

Adjusting the drag is done in various ways depending on manufacturer and model. Listed below are some of the more common ways:

A number system 1-10,\*

An arrow pointing to the words **less** or **more** \*

Located near the handle (*called a star drag*). \*

\* You'll want to look at the instructions for you're reel to determine how to operate the drag.

**Drag is something you'll need to understand and know how to use.**

Take some time and learn how to adjust the drag for your reel.

Adjusting it will either make the fish fight harder or it will make it easier on him to pull line from the spool. We suggest playing with this setting so you'll get comfortable making the proper adjustment when

the time comes. Keep in mind; it's something that may need to be changed several times a day depending on how the fish are fighting.

You may be wondering, "If setting the drag tires out the fish, why not just tighten it down all the way to begin with"? There are a couple of reasons why you don't want to do this:

It will increase the tension on the line causing it to possibly break  
Adding too much pressure could cause the lure to be ripped from the fish's mouth during the fight.

Either way the fish is getting away from you.

### **On the flip side, if it's set too loose:**

The fish will run taking your line around stumps, rocks etc. until it breaks.

The fish could simply shake his head, and because of the slack on the line, the lure comes free.

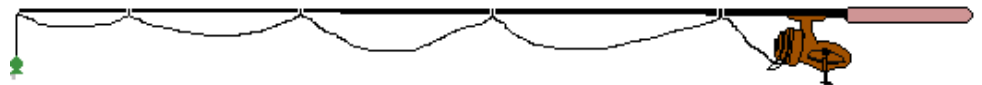
### **The line must stay tight at all times.**

For more information about fighting the fish [click here](#).

Drag is something you'll learn to use over time, and unfortunately, the lessons can be heartbreaking knowing that one got away because it wasn't properly set.

### **Ball Bearings**

Without getting into too much detail, the number of ball bearings determines the smoothness of the reel. Simply put the more ball bearings the better.



## **Spin Cast Reel**

sometimes called "Closed Face" reel

The Spin Cast Reel is typically an inexpensive type of reel and by far the easiest reel to use! I recommend it for a beginning fisherman's first reel.



The set will give you a lot of trouble free fishing and is capable of holding what ever you catch.

Spincast reels have a pushbutton line release for casting and an enclosed "nosecone" where the line comes out of the reel. Spincasting reels are mounted on top of the rod and are used primarily by casual anglers, usually fishing for small to medium sized fish.

These reels are easy to use, inexpensive to buy and might be a good choice if you're not sure how much fishing you're going to do.

*Plus it's not too terribly expensive if it's lost.*

Spincast rods typically are 5 to 6 feet in length, have a short, "pistol grip" and small eyes. These rods are usually fairly limber in action and light in weight. Spincast equipment is fine for casting medium weight lures/bait. These don't usually work very well for heavy-duty fishing but some larger spincast reels have been designed for catfishing and are gaining some acceptance.

Spincasting reels typically are the easiest to learn but they have some failings. Typically, reels of this type don't have much line capacity, rendering them unsuitable for fishing that requires a lot of line or really heavy pound test. They also usually don't have a very good drag system and the gears in these reels are usually cast plastic or white metal. The gear ratio for the line retrieve is pretty low also, making it difficult to work a lure that requires any amount of speed. If casting accuracy is required, it is difficult with spincast equipment.

The better quality reels are fine for typical panfishing and casual weekend bobber watching but if you think that you're going to get fairly serious about fishing, you might want to consider the next 2 categories.

Just so you're aware, this reel requires a spinning rod because the reel attaches on the under side of the rod. For more information about rods, be sure to see [the rod page](#).

This reel is the easiest to remove tangles, because the spool is exposed. If there is a tangle, it's a simple matter of flipping open the bail and pulling line off.

**[Learn how to Cast this Rod & Reel](#)**  
**[Care of your spin cast fishing reel](#)**

**Open Face Spinning Reel**



Next in line is the Open Face Spinning Reel. It is a little more difficult to use than the Spin Cast, but it comes in a wider variety of sizes.



It comes in ultra-light models for smaller tackle used to catch panfish all the way up to a big bruiser used to catch bigger gamefish such as "Bull Reds" in the surf. It's very useful for situations when a longer casting range is needed.

Spinning rods are usually more limber than baitcasting tackle. This limberness is one of the things that makes spinning excellent for casting light lures or bait, much more so than either spincasting or baitcasting. The other thing that allows spinning equipment to cast light lures far is the design of the reel. The line is allowed to peel off the spool on a cast, unimpeded by either the nosecone of spincast reel or the friction of a turning baitcast reel's spool.

Spinning rods come in various lengths.

The line capacity of spinning reels is much higher than that of spincast reels so fishing for salmon or trout is possible. "Most" spinning reels have a much smoother drag too, something that is required for finesse fishing and for long running fish. However, the qualities that make spinning great for finesse fishing also somewhat limit where it can be used.

[Learn how to Cast this Rod & Reel](#)



## Bait Casting Reel



Last, but not least, there is the Bait Casting Reel.



Let me begin by stating that I do not suggest this type for your first reel. Maybe your third or fourth once you're proficient with the other two reel types.

It is the most difficult to cast with, but it comes in widest variety of sizes, and can handle a lot of abuse day in and day out. There are models for light-weight use, and bigger models for catching huge fish such as Marlin.

Baitcasting is used anytime heavy cover is going to be targeted. It's ability to handle heavy line, lures and fish is unmatched as is its strength to weight ratio. Baitcast equipment is NOT meant to be used with light lures; anything under ¼ oz. would be better fished with spinning tackle. Baitcasting tackle is the goto tackle when big fish and big lures meet thick, nasty cover. Also, because you control the cast with your thumb, pinpoint accuracy is possible. Once you become proficient with a baitcast reel, it's possible to drop a lure in a 6-inch circle at 50 feet, with hardly a ripple on the water. That kind of accuracy and "touch" is rarely possible with spincasting or spinning tackle.

Baitcasting rods too come in varying lengths and look somewhat like a spincasting rod. But that's where all similarity ends. Baitcasting rods typically have a lot more backbone than the other types of rods. It's this backbone that allows you to muscle a fish from thick weed growth or away from timber. It's also this backbone that allows you to cast heavyweight lures, work big jerkbaits and twitch crankbaits effectively. Try these tactics with most spinning tackle and you'll be exhausted.

The Bait caster Reel mounts to the top of a bait casting rod (this has smaller guides attached to the top side of the rod). This has more uses than the spinning combo - but requires more coordination to use. The line comes off these reels from the top, so it doesn't twist, however, the angler's thumb is used to help control the speed the line unwinds off the reel when casting. Basically, if you forget to put your thumb down over the line on the reel, or don't use enough pressure, the reel spins faster than the line can go through the guides, so it creates a big mess of snarled, tangled line called a backlash, or a "woof" or various

other descriptive names.

A really good comparison is what happens to a lot of necklaces thrown into a jewelry box and shaken. Imagine that mess all tangled together with only two ends, one safely hidden by feet of unused line on the reel, and the other at least six feet away, threaded through the rod, with a very sharp object tied to the end. Backlashes are a calculated risk when using a bait caster, and your angler may use many colorful metaphors if one occurs on his favorite reel.

## [Learn how to Cast this Rod & Reel](#)

# Rods

*A fishing rod used to be called a fishing pole.*

*Now fishing pole refers only to a bamboo or cane pole with fishing line tied to one end. This pole has its benefits. First of all there is no reel to stop working. No spool of line to make a birds nest with. If you can place the bait into the perfect spot in between the limbs of a fallen tree straight down from the tip of your pole, you can lift the bait straight back up with out getting hung up on the limb.*

*The rod and reel will have to drag across it and get hung up.*

*Fishing rods come in several lengths, strengths (called "action"), and can be affordable or almost obscenely expensive.*

*Rod and reel benefits. With the rod and reel you can fish farther away and use lures that have to moved through the water like a minnow swimming.*

There are a wide variety of rods out there to choose from and there are quite a few manufacturers making them also. They also come in different sizes and shapes. Fishing wouldn't be very exciting if there wasn't a wide variety of rods to fish with, just like reels. They both get paired together to provide a variety of options for fishing for a variety of fish.

Short, stout rods are used mostly for trolling for big game fish. Longer rods are designed for longer casting situations such as surf fishing. You don't need to go to the sporting goods store and buy the longest rod you can find. You need to be capable of handling your rod without tiring. I've caught plenty of fish within 10 feet of the shore.

I recommend a light action rod about 4 to 5 foot long for a beginning fisherman's first rod. It is ideal for smaller fish, it's lightweight, and can handle smaller terminal tackle very well. Plus it's not too terribly expensive if it's lost.

The most important thing, is to get equipment that is best suited for the type of fishing that you plan on doing. Get your parents or the person working in the local tackle shop to help you.

[More on RODS](#)

[Click Here](#)

## Conclusion

The most *important* thing, is to get equipment that is best suited for the type of fishing that you plan on doing.

***DON'T EVER***  
*buy anything that is shrink-wrapped on a sheet of cardboard.*

I guarantee that you will be frustrated and disappointed before the first day is done.

Get your parents or the person working in the local tackle shop to help you.

If you're going to go just a time or two each season, fishing for whatever is biting, mostly watching and waiting for a bobber to go down, then get a 5 ½ - 6 foot light action spincast rod and a matching reel, take the line off that comes with the reel (most spincast reels come prepackaged with junk line) and re-fill the reel with a quality 8 pound test monofilament line. Buy some assorted terminal tackle and other fishing equipment and you're in business.

You used to fish as a kid but haven't touched a rod in years. You know that you like to fish but until recently, you haven't had time. You want to catch bluegills and perch most of the time but you'd like to maybe try bass fishing or chase a walleye or two.

You know that you don't want the ol' Snoopy Catchem Kit but aren't sure what to get.

My suggestion to you is to go find a 6 - 6 ½ foot spinning rod. There are many quality, mid-priced fishing rods available today. Look for names like Berkely, Shimano and Mitchell for decent mid-priced rods. A little higher on the spectrum are rods like St. Croix, Fenwick, Falcon, All-Star, higher yet, you start getting into G. Loomis prices and your "spousal unit" starts pricing lawyers.

A medium sized spinning reel to hang on the rod is needed. You want to make sure that the rod and reel are matched for size and balance. You'll know if they're balanced if you put the reel on the rod, and rest the rod, just in front of the reel foot on your index finger. The rod should balance out, if the rod tips forward, you've picked too small of a reel, tip backwards and you've got to pick out a smaller reel.

Spool this package up with 6 or 8 pound premium mono and you're in

business for 90% of the fishing that most people will do. But what about that remaining 10%? You're in baitcasting territory now!

If you want to pick on toothy critters (muskie or pike) or start chasing bass in heavy cover, this is specialized tackle. For most bass and pike fishing, medium bass tackle will work well. At this point, you have to decide whether you want one of the newer, low profile type reels or do you want the traditional round reel. There are factions in the fishing world that will swear that one type or the other is the best. To be perfectly honest, quality reels can be found in both round and low profiles.

One of the reasons to get a low profile reel is if you have small hands. Many of my smaller framed clients really like this type of reel. It seems to fit their hand better and makes a day of fishing easier.

Other anglers think that the round reels are stronger, smoother, more traditional, or whatever. From an engineering standpoint, they are both equally strong and smooth. It's just a personal preference. So, which style is best for you? I don't know, my advice is to fish with someone who has both, try them and get whichever one feels better in YOUR hands.

Rod selection can be daunting. Look in some of the major sporting goods catalogs and you'll see a wide array of baitcasting rods. There's specialty rods for crankbaits, jigs, plastic worms, flippin', walleye rods, bass rods, muskie rods?. What's a guy to get? I like a 6 - 7 foot fast action, medium weight graphite rod.

Again, just like the spinning rods, there are a wide variety of prices and sizes.

Getting started in fishing can be a daunting task, hopefully we shed some light.



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## Knots to Know



There are many different skills associated with being successful at fishing. One of them is the art of tying good knots. Monofilament fishing line stretches and is kind of slippery, so using the proper knot is important if you want to keep your bait, lure, or fish on the line.

This section will show you how to tie all of the knots needed to properly assemble your gear. In order to tie effective knots, you must realize that neatness counts. If a knot slips, it will probably break. Therefore, it is essential you completely tighten all knots. This is accomplished by lubricating the knot before you tighten it down. You can use water, saliva, or silicone fly floatant.

**One word of caution should be exercised here. You should never put any part of your line into your mouth to wet the knot. Many Streams and lakes contain bacteria that can be harmful to you.**

If you use saliva, drip or spit it on the knot instead. When you tighten the knot, do so very slowly. What you are trying to do is tighten the knot without building up too much heat. If you tighten the knot quickly, friction will cause excessive heat, which in turn weakens the line. A smooth slow draw is best.

**Here are a couple of knots worth learning:**

### The one and most important knot to know is The Clinch Knot or Cinch Knot (or Fisherman's Knot)

This knot is used for that most important place-where the hook (or the swivel or the lure) meets the line. A reliable knot here will save you lots of lost lures and fish!

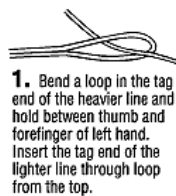


### Menu of Knots

[\[Albright\]](#) [\[Arbor\]](#) [\[Blood\]](#) [\[Braid\]](#) [\[Barrel\]](#) [\[Clinch\]](#) [\[Double Surgeons\]](#) [\[King Sling\]](#) [\[Nail\]](#) [\[Needle\]](#) [\[Palomar\]](#) [\[Perfection\]](#) [\[Snell\]](#) [\[Specialist Fly\]](#) [\[Trilene\]](#) [\[Triple Surgeons\]](#) [\[Uni\]](#) [\[Turle\]](#) [\[Turtle\]](#) [\[Wedge\]](#)

### Albright Knot

The Albright Knot is most commonly used for joining monofilament lines of unequal diameters, for creating shock leaders and when Bimini Twist is tied in the end of lighter casting line. It is also used for connecting monofilament to wire.



2. Slip tag end of lighter line under your left thumb and pinch it tightly against the heavier strands of the loop. Wrap the first turn of the lighter line over itself and continue wrapping toward the round end of loop. Take at least 12 turns with the lighter line around all three strands.



3. Insert tag end of the lighter line through end of loop from the bottom. It must enter and leave the loop on same side.



4. With the thumb and forefinger of left hand, slide the coils of lighter line towards end of loop, stop 1/8" from end of loop. Using pliers, pull tag end of lighter line tight to keep coils from slipping off loop.

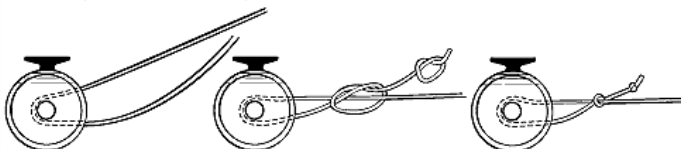
5. With your left hand still holding the heavier line pull on the standing part of the lighter line. Pull the tag end of the lighter line and the standing part a second time. Pull the standing part of the heavy mono and the standing part of the light line.



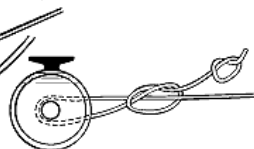
6. Trim both tag ends.

### Arbor Knot

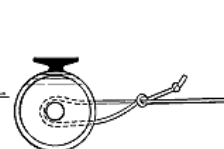
The Arbor Knot provides the angler with a quick, easy connection for attaching line to the reel spool.



1. Pass line around reel arbor.



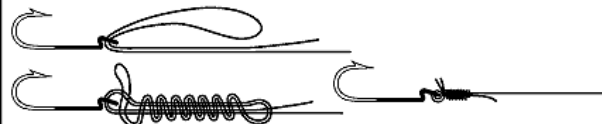
2. Tie an overhand knot around the standing line. Then tie a second overhand knot in the tag end.



3. Pull tight and snip off excess. Snug down first overhand knot on the reel arbor.

### Berkley® Braid Knot

This special knot has been extensively tested by the Berkley R&D staff and has proven to be one of the best for use with the new braided lines.



1. Run double loop through eye of hook or lure.



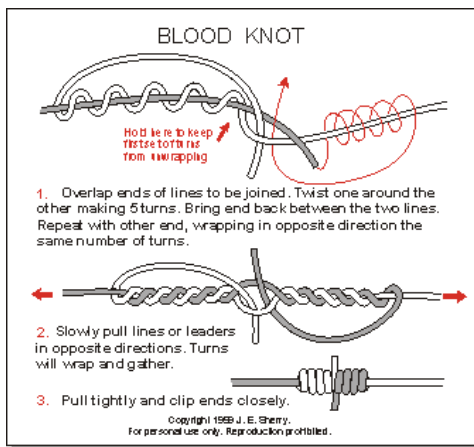
2. Loop around end of line and standing part of braided line 8 times. Thread double loop back between the eye and coils.



3. Tighten knot with a steady, even motion without hesitation. Trim double loop and end of braided line leaving about 1/4".

### Blood Knot or Barrel Knot

This is a high strength knot to join two similar thicknesses of line. It's main advantage is it's low profile enabling it to run smoothly through rod line guides.

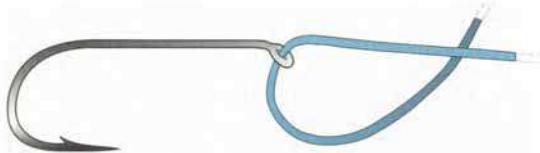




### Clinch / Cinch Knot (*Fisherman's Knot*)

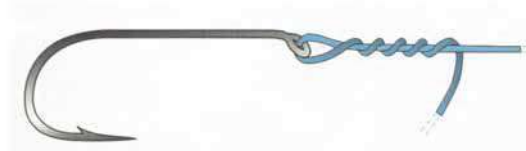
This knot is used for that most important place-where the hook (or the swivel or the lure) meets the line. A reliable knot here will save you lots of lost lures and fish!

1.



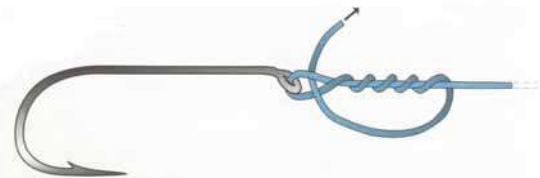
Run several inches of line through the hook eye. Don't be stingy here. Make it comfortable and easy to tie.

2.



Wrap the loose end of your line around itself five or six times.

3.



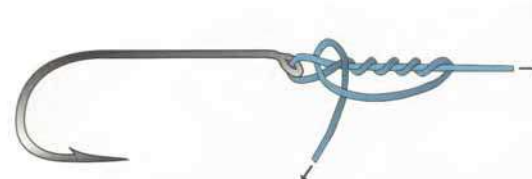
Pass the loose end through the loop in the line next to the eye in the hook.

4.



Push the loose end through the new loop you just created. Wet the knot with a little spit. This will lubricate the line and make your knot easier to tighten.

5.



Tighten the knot slowly by pulling on the line with one hand and the hook with the other.

6.

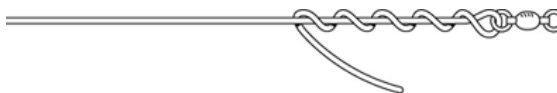


Trim off the loose end of the line with a pair of fingernail clippers.

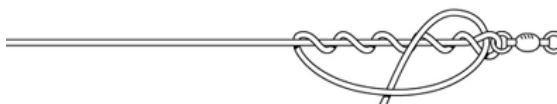
### The Improved Clinch Knot

The Improved Clinch is very easy to tie, which is the main reason it's so popular for connecting monofilament to terminal tackle. It's most effective on lines under 20-pound test.

1) Pass the line through the eye of the hook, swivel, or lure. Double back and make five turns around the standing line.



2) Holding the coils in place, thread the tag end of the first loop above the eye, then through the big loop



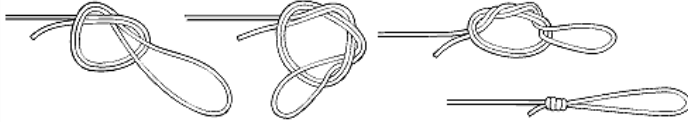
3) Hold the tag end and standing line while pulling up the coils. Make sure the coils are in a spiral, not overlapping each other. Slide against the eye.



4) Clip the tag end.

### Double Surgeon's Loop

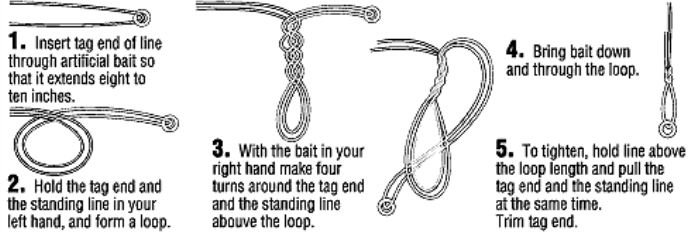
The Double Surgeon's Loop is a quick, easy way to tie a loop in the end of a leader. It is often used as part of a leader system because it is relatively strong.



1. Double the tag end of the line. Make a single overhand knot in the double line.
2. Hold the tag end and standing part of the line in your left hand and bring the loop around and insert through the overhand knot.
3. Hold the loop in your right hand. Hold the tag end and standing line in your left hand.
4. Moisten the knot in water and pull to tighten. Trim tag end to about 1/8".

### King Sling Knot

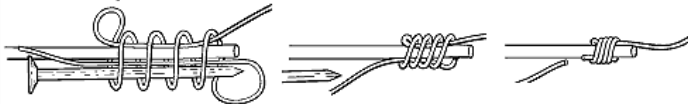
The King Sling Knot offers the angler an easy -to-tie end loop knot which is used primarily as a connection for crank baits. This knot allows the lure to work freely, making it more lifelike, and resulting in more strikes.



1. Insert tag end of line through artificial bait so that it extends eight to ten inches.
2. Hold the tag end and the standing line in your left hand, and form a loop.
3. With the bait in your right hand make four turns around the tag end and the standing line above the loop.
4. Bring bait down and through the loop.
5. To tighten, hold line above the loop length and pull the tag end and the standing line at the same time. Trim tag end.

### Nail Knot

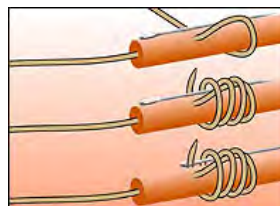
The Nail Knot is generally used to attach fly line to fly line backing. This knot can also be used to attach a leader to the line. This makes a strong smooth knot that rolls out when casting. The nail knot is good for attaching two lines of different diameters.



1. Hold nail or needle, tip of fly line and backing material between thumb and forefinger. Wrap backing 6 or 7 turns. Wind carefully for a tight, smooth knot. Stick end of backing between nail and fly line.
2. Remove nail. Holding coils carefully between thumb and forefinger, alternately pull both ends of backing with free hand to tighten.
3. Snip off excess backing and end of fly line.

### Needle Knot

This knot can be used to attach permanently a thick length of nylon to the end of the fly line, to which, in turn, the leader is attached.



**Use:** Attaching backing to fly line.

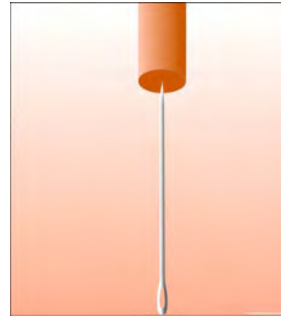
**Description:** This is a good knot to use to attach the end of the backing to the fly line or a thick nylon leader butt. It can be tied with a nail or, more easily, with either a tube or a needle.



**Tying:**

1.

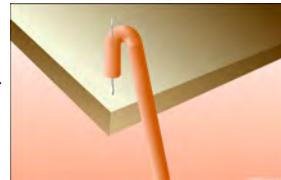
To tie this knot you will need a strong needle with an eye large enough to take the backing or nylon that you are using.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

2.

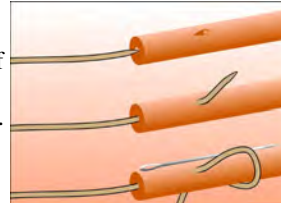
Push the needle into the centre of the core of the fly line and out through the side wall, about 5mm from the end of the line.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

3.

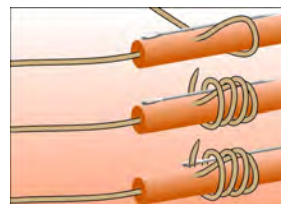
Thread the end of the backing or nylon through the eye of the needle and use the needle to pull about 100mm of backing or nylon through the fly line, out through the side.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

4.

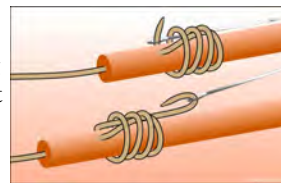
Now lay the needle against the fly line with the eye in line with the end of the line. Make three turns of the backing or nylon around the line and needle, working toward the eye of the needle. Thread the backing or nylon through the eye and withdraw the needle and nylon.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

5.

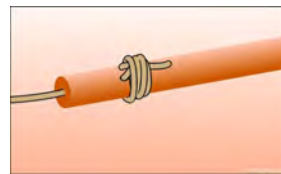
Remove the needle and carefully tighten the turns, taking care that they do not overlap. Do not over-tighten the knot as this can cause a dog-leg in the fly line.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

6.

Trim off the tag end of the backing or nylon close to the line.



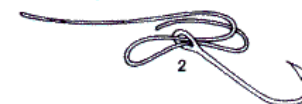
[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

**Palomar Knot**

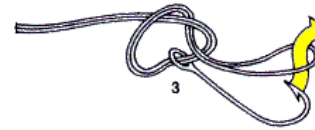
1. Start with plenty of line.



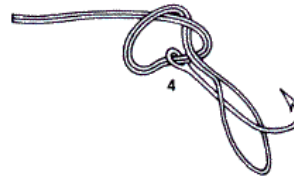
2. Double the line and pass the end through the hook's eye.



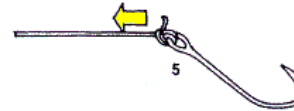
3. Tie an overhand knot (*like you were tying your shoe strings*) but do not pull it tight yet.




4. Pass the hook through the loop.



5. Pull the loose end of the line to tighten the knot.  
Trim the end.  
Leave at least 1/8 inch of your line at the knot.



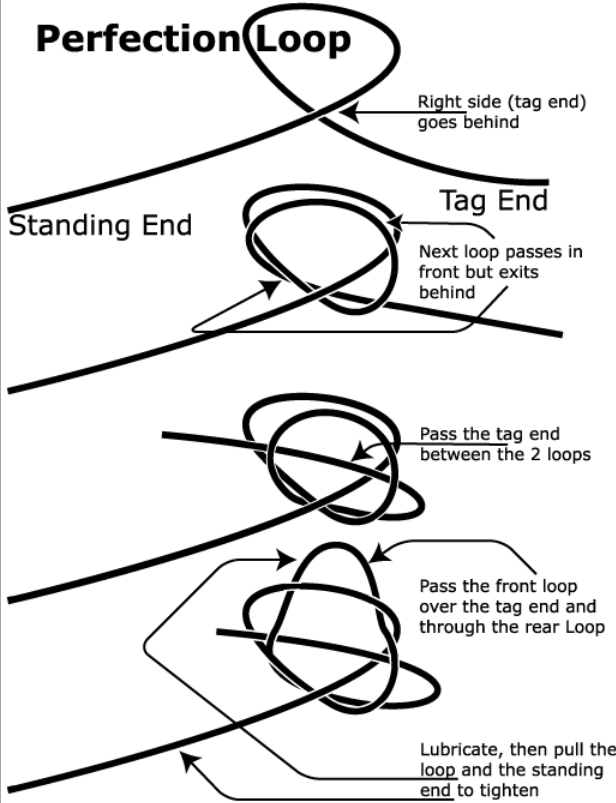


## Perfection Knot

The Perfection Loop knot is the perfect knot for the leader butt section when attaching fly lines to leaders with a loop to loop connection.

*Although the illustrations seem complicated, the knot is a breeze to tie.*

### Perfection Loop



**Step 1**  
With the standing end in your left hand and the tag end in your right form a loop. Make sure the tag end is behind the standing end. Hold the lines in place by pinching with your thumb and index finger.

**Step 2**  
With the lines pinched in your left hand make a loop in front of the first loop with the tag end. Again, make sure the tag end exits behind both loops.

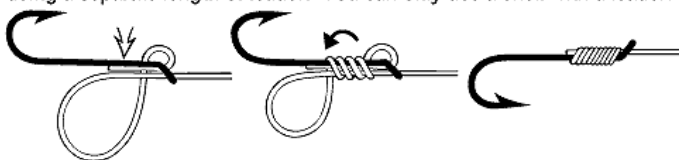
**Step 3**  
Pass the tag end between the 2 loops, continuing to pinch all lines with the left hand.

**Step 4**  
Pass the loop closest to you over the tag end and through the rear loop.

**Step 5**  
As with all knots, lubricate before tightening. Pull the loop (the one passed through the rear loop) and the standing end in opposite directions and tighten down firmly.

### Snell Knot

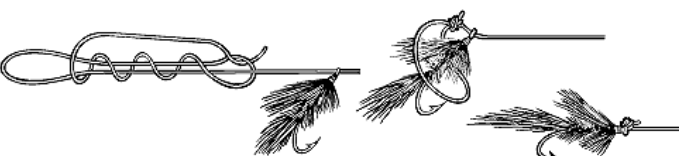
The Snell Knot provides a strong connection when fishing with bait and using a separate length of leader. You can only use a snell with a leader.



1. Insert one end of the leader through the hook's eye extending one to two inches past the eye. Insert the other end of the leader through the eye in the opposite direction pointing toward the barb of hook. Hold the hook and leader ends between thumb and forefinger of your left hand. Leader will hang below the hook in a large loop.
2. Take the part of this loop that is closest to the eye and wrap it over the hook and shank and both ends of the leader toward the hook's barb. Wrap for 7 or 8 turns and hold wraps with left hand. Grip the end of leader that is through the eyelet with your right hand and pull it slowly and steadily. Hold the turns with your left hand or the knot will unravel.
3. When the knot is almost tight, slide it up against the eye of the hook. Grip the short end lying along the shank of the hook with a pair of pliers. Pull this end and the standing line at the same time to completely tighten the knot. Trim the tag end.

### Specialist Fly Knot

The Specialist fly knot is used to attach the fly to leader.



1. Place leader through fly eyelet and slide fly up the leader out of the way before beginning knot.
2. Make an oval loop and hold each end while wrapping the leader around the loop center 3 or 4 times.
3. Stick end of leader through loop closest to fly and cinch knot snug.
4. Trim tag end then place the fly through the loop and pull snug.

### Trilene® Knot

The Trilene Knot is a strong, reliable connection that resists slippage and premature failures. This knot can be used in joining line to swivels, snaps, hooks and artificial lures. The knot's unique double wrap design and ease of tying consistently yields a strong, dependable connection.



1. Run end of line through eye of hook or lure and double back through the eye a second time.
2. Loop around standing part of line 5 or 6 times. Thread tag end back between the eye and the coils as shown.
3. Tighten knot with a steady, even motion without hesitation. Trim tag end leaving about 1/4".

### Triple Surgeons Knot

**1** Cut off about 36" of leader. Lay the leader and Power Pro together overlapping about 8".

Form an overhand knot in this doubled section by forming a loop, bringing the leader and the end of the Power Pro around and through the loop (treat these two as if they were a single strand). Do not tighten the knot yet.

**2** Go through the loop three times, then wet the knot and draw it tight holding both lines at one end of the knot in one hand and both lines at the other end of the line in the other hand.

Trim the tag ends as close as you can without cutting the knot.

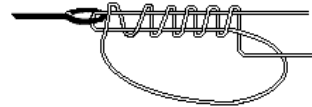
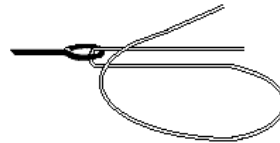
**3**

**4**

### The Uni-Knot

1. Run line through eye of hook, swivel or lure at least six inches and fold to make two parallel lines. Bring end of line back in a circle toward hook or lure.

2. Make six turns with tag end around the double line and through the circle. Hold double line at point where it passes through eye and pull tag end to snug up turns.



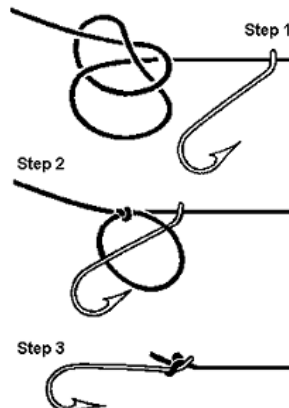
3. Now pull standing line to slide knot up against eye.

4. Continue pulling until knot is tight. Trim tag end flush with closest coil of knot. Uni-Knot will not slip.



### Turtle Knot

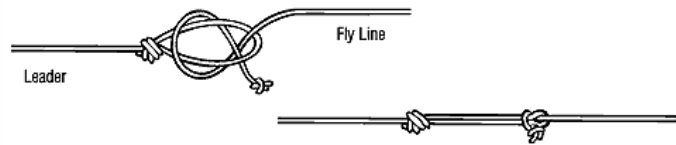
Also known as the Turtle Knot, and Major Turtle's Knot, it is simplicity itself to tie, but is one of the weakest knots. It should never be used for light lines, and there are better knots for use with heavy ones.



1. Pass the line through the eye of the hook.
2. Make a simple loop.
3. Carry the end of the line on to make a Simple Overhand Knot upon the loop.
4. Pass the loop over the hook.
5. Draw up into shape.

## Wedge Knot

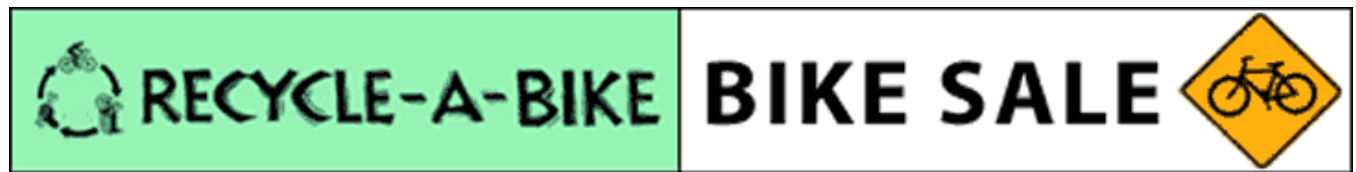
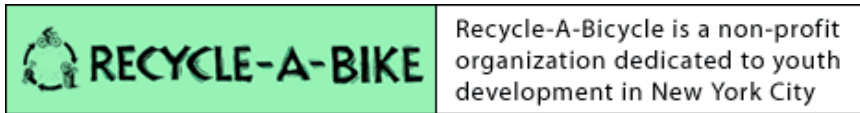
The Wedge Knot is a general-purpose connection used in joining fishing line to a leader with a loop.



1. Tie a knot in the end of fly line.
2. Pass the fly line and knot through the leader loop and back around to form a simple knot.
3. Pull both ends to cinch up tight.



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# Learn To Cast

**Don't know how to cast?  
Fear not!**

**Using spinning or spin casting (closed faced) takes  
all of about 2 min. for an adult to learn the  
basics.**

*Ask the clerk in the store, they should be able to  
teach you.*

## The Spin Cast Reel Open Face Spinning Reel Bait Casting Reel

### HOW TO CAST **The Spin Cast Reel**

Learning how to cast takes some practice, but is really pretty simple.

Beginners will find it easiest to learn with a spin-cast outfit. (Note: you can first practice casting in your yard by tying a small non-sharp weighted object to the line.)

Get a feel for the equipment-Hold the rod out in front of you to get a feel for how the spin-cast reel works.

Reel up the line until the bobber is about four inches from the tip of the rod.

Now, press down firmly on the release button and hold it there.

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*Notice how the bobber stays in the same place.*

Now let the release button go. The bobber should fall to the ground.

**You have just learned how to release the line from the reel, a very important step in casting.**

To prevent loops that can become tangles from forming in the line, carefully add tension to the line with your thumb and forefinger while reeling in the line.

You should hear a click when you start to reel-that is the pick-up pin of the reel being activated.

Now you are all set to wind line back onto the spool of the reel.

**Remember whenever you are fishing to always reel in enough line after you cast to hear that click.**

*This will prevent excess line from coming out of the reel, and loose line can mean missed fish.*

## **Final Check**

Your line is ready and your hook and bobber are tied on.

Place your bobber 6-12" from your rod tip and make sure your line is not wrapped around your rod.

***Before you cast, look behind you to be sure no one else is there.***

***Also, check for trees and bushes that can get in your way.***

## **Casting**

Face the target area with body turned at a slight angle, about a quarter turn. Aim the rod tip toward the target, about level with your eyes.

Press and hold down the reel's release button.

Swiftly and smoothly, bend your arm at the elbow, raising your hand with the rod until it almost reaches eye level. When the rod is almost straight up and down, it will be bent back by the weight of the practice plug. As the rod bends, move your forearm forward with a slight wrist movement.



Next, gently sweep the rod forward, causing the rod to bend with the motion.

As the rod moves in front of you, reaching eye level, about the 10 o'clock position, release your thumb from the button.



The bend in the rod casts the bobber and bait out.

**You have just made a cast!**

*If the plug landed close in front of you, you released the thumb button too late.*

*If the plug went more or less straight up, you released the thumb button too soon.*

## HOW TO CAST

### **The Open Face Spinning Reel**

The best way to hold a spinning reel for casting is to slide your rod hand around the reel seat, with two fingers in front of the reel stem and two fingers behind it. This gives you a good casting grip and more importantly, leaves your forefinger free to trap the line as the casting swing is made.



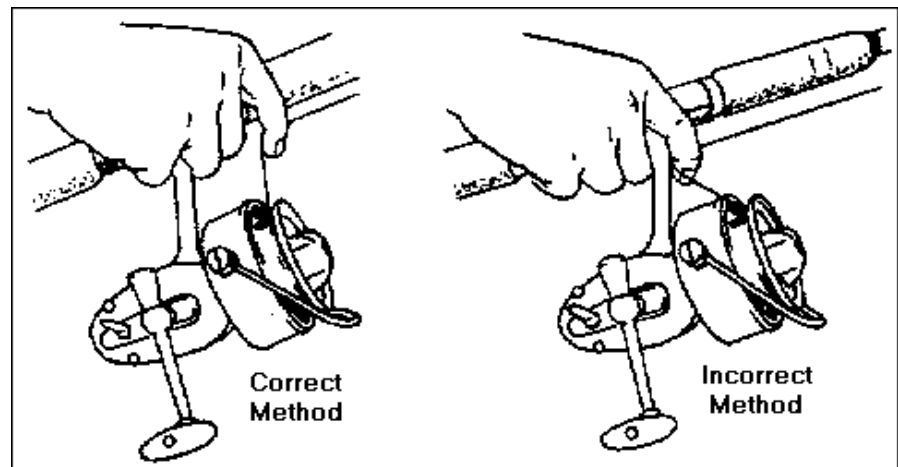
A suitable amount of line is allowed to hang from the rod tip (between 15 and 45 cm should do it). The first finger of the reel hand is extended down toward the spool to pick up the line ahead of the bail arm and the line is then pulled back up against the rod grip, where the finger traps it. The bail arm is opened with your other hand and the reel is now ready for casting. It's important to get this sequence right. If you open the bail arm before you trap the line, line will spill from the spool and you'll get into a mess.

With the line trapped and the bail open, swing the rod back past your shoulder and then forward again in a swift, smooth arc. This forward casting stroke should start slow, accelerate, then finish by drifting forward so the rod points horizontally in front of you.

At the appropriate moment (while rod is still moving forward) the finger holding the line is straightened, and the casting weight is thrown forward, towing the line behind it. You need to get this release timed right though, as if you release too early in the swing, the bait will fly up into the air and land who knows where. If you release the line too late in the swing, you will know where the bait lands all right because chances are it will go into the ground or water by your feet.

A useful way to get the timing of this release right, is to swing the rod forward and as your casting arms begins to extend, point the line holding finger straight at your casting target. Most times, this will release the line at the correct moment and also direct the cast where it should go.

The technique works with short and light single-handed rods, such as you might use for trout, bass, bream and so on, and with big, heavy, two-handed rods, suitable for beach or rock-fishing. With the single-handed rod, your free hand and arm does not come into play very much, but when casting with a two-handed rod, your other hand is needed, to anchor the rod butt and provide a fulcrum for the cast. During the cast, this other hand holds the butt down and in front of your body to act as a pivot point, while the reel hand swings and pushes the rod through the casting arc.





Step 1

Casting with a Spinning Reel begins by trapping the line against the rod grip with your index finger.



Step 2

Holding the line, open the bail arm.



Step 3

The outfit is now ready for casting.



Step 4

Swing the rod in a smooth arc and release the line by pointing your finger at your chosen target.



Casting with a double-handed rod and a large spinning reel is exactly the same procedure, except that the non-reel hand comes into play, providing a pivot point for the rod swing.

There's more than One Way  
to Cast with the  
Open-Face Spinning Reel

[Click Here](#)

## HOW TO CAST The Bait Casting Reel

Bait-casting describes a fishing technique and its associated tackle that originated in the early 1800s. It took its name from its initial purpose, which was to cast live bait. Modern bait-casting reels utilize a revolving-spool reel to cast artificial lures and live bait.

Basically, the weight of the lure or bait pulls line from the spool until it reaches the intended casting target. The objective is to offer a tempting lure or bait to fish from a distance.

Bait-casting is one of four basic categories of fishing tackle. The other three are spin-casting, spinning, and fly-casting. They differ from one another in popularity, ease of use, fishing styles, spool type, and strength.

There are no great differences between the four casting techniques, with the exception of fly-casting, in which the weight of the line (not the lure) delivers a near-weightless fly. Spin-casting is probably the most popular because it is easily used by children and novices who do not want or need to spend much time learning to cast. Spin-casters are willing to sacrifice accuracy for ease of use. Spinning is also popular among beginners, though widely used by anglers at all levels of experience.

While bait-casting is similar to other casting techniques in its purpose and methods, it is a distinct and unique style of fishing. It is generally used for freshwater fishing, mostly large species like largemouth bass, catfish and northern pike. But bait-casting tackle is well suited to saltwater species such as tarpon and snook.

### Why Bait-casting?

Beginners, or anglers with only spinning or spin-casting experience, may wonder why they should bother learning the bait-casting technique. The main strength of this technique is that, when mastered, it allows for a high degree of accuracy in the placement of a bait or lure. Conversely, it is more difficult to learn than other types of casting and requires a higher level of skill to achieve desired results. But learning and mastering the technique will make the angler a more complete fisherman.

For the freshwater fisherman pursuing any species larger than small trout or panfish, bait-casting gear is considered standard equipment. This is due to the tremendous versatility of bait-casting tackle. Lures such as crankbaits (plugs), large spinners and spinnerbaits, heavy jigs, large soft plastics, topwater and other lures are fished most effectively with bait-casting gear.

Expert and serious anglers prefer bait-casting because it offers the combination of high line capacity, cranking power and greater casting accuracy from both short and long distances. The mechanics of a bait-cast reel are strong, durable and less prone to failure than spinning or spin-cast reels.

While spinning tackle definitely serves a valuable purpose, especially when using small lures, light line (10-pound test or lighter) and/or live bait, bait-casting gear gives the angler

unmatched versatility for a variety of lures and fishing methods. Most experienced anglers have at least one, if not more, of both spinning and bait-casting outfits.

## Casting a Bait Casting Reel

There sure is a fair amount of miss-information flowing around on baitcasters or overheads. Many fishing enthusiasts believe they are difficult to use, yet this is not really the case, because in fact they are easy to master. If you use the correct technique, and are prepared to spent a bit of time practicing so that it becomes a natural process, a baitcaster will become a dream machine to use.

A golf swing requires hours of repetitive practice to perfect. In contrast, an overhead baitcaster requires nothing like the time the golf swing needs. However, it does require a little repetitive training. For those prepared to put in the hour or two, the rewards will be fantastic and you'll find accuracy and distance with every cast. And you won't get those embarrassing line twists, or bird-nests.



To begin, hold the rod and reel tilted so that the handles are higher than the spool of the reel. (*Left handers should have the handles facing down*). The reel should be cocked to one side of top dead centre.

Secondly, the grip should be similar to holding a tennis racket. The "V" developed between the thumb and the index finger should be virtually at top dead centre. The grip should be relaxed.

You will find that in holding the rod as described in rules 1 & 2, the index finger is all that is required to

stop the rod falling to the floor. The weight, or balance of the rod will cause the butt to push up into the palm of the hand. Actually it will be pushing up into the palm area beneath the thumb known as "the mount".

And last but not least, the area between the side of your thumb and the flat of your thumb should rest across the line on the spool. In other words, if you consider the rod to be pointing North, your thumb should be pointing more North West than North.

These three rules of thumb are the basis for making overhead baitcasting a dream.

Too many anglers attempt to hold the reel in the upright position. This forces the thumb to lie straight north south, and this in turn cause a whole host of problems which are sure to result in over-runs



(birdnests).

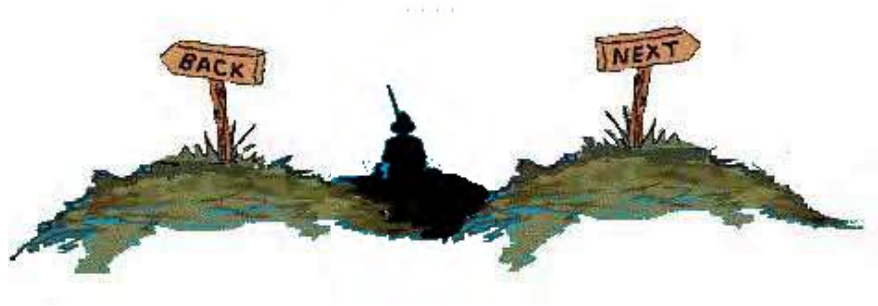
### **Upright Problems**

The first of these problems is that you have to grip the rod too firmly, and use all your fingers. If you don't, the tip of the rod will fall away to the ground.

Secondly, you will find that as you bring the rod back to cast your wrist will lock. This, in turn, will force you to use more arm action, destroying the natural action of the rod, and resulting in less distance, less accuracy and the expenditure of more energy.

Thirdly, on the forward thrust, your thumb will want to lift off the line on the spool. This will occur as a direct result of the mount of your palm and your fingers fighting to grip the rod, to stop it leaving your hand. Once your thumb cocks up in the air as a result of this wrong grip, you can guarantee a back-lash. Your thumb will never get back down on the spool quickly enough to stop it.

By rotating the reel to the side, you no longer have to hold the rod with that vice like grip. You can now relax your grip, bring your fingers into the cast, and it becomes all wrist action, with a completely relaxed forearm. The forearm in fact becomes an extension of the rod's length, pivoting at the elbow, whilst your upper arm remains relatively motionless.





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## Know Your Fish

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### Perch



#### Where They Live

Perch live in lakes and ponds with slightly deeper water; larger perch like depths of 10 to 50 feet.

Perch hang out together in schools, so . . .

Where there is one . . .

there are probably MORE!

#### What They Eat

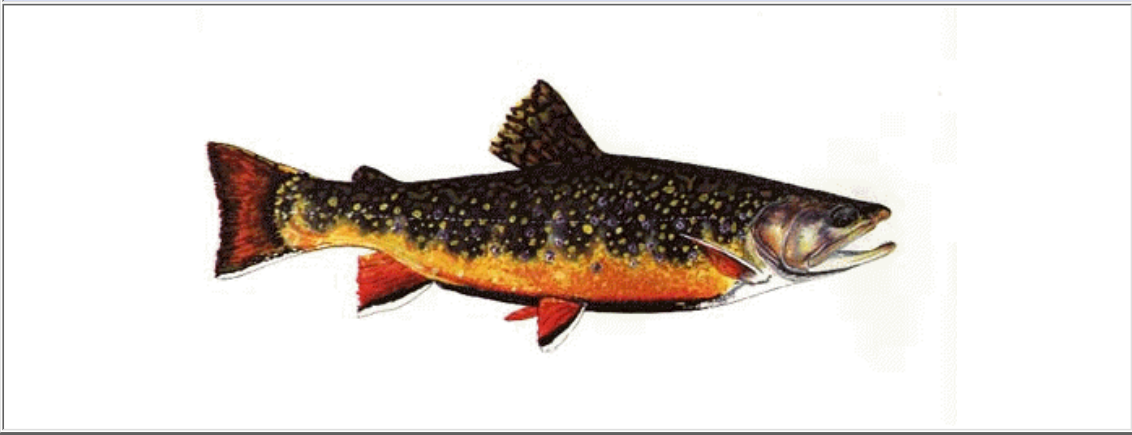
minnows  
worms  
grasshoppers  
crayfish  
artificial spinners  
jigs

### Brown Trout



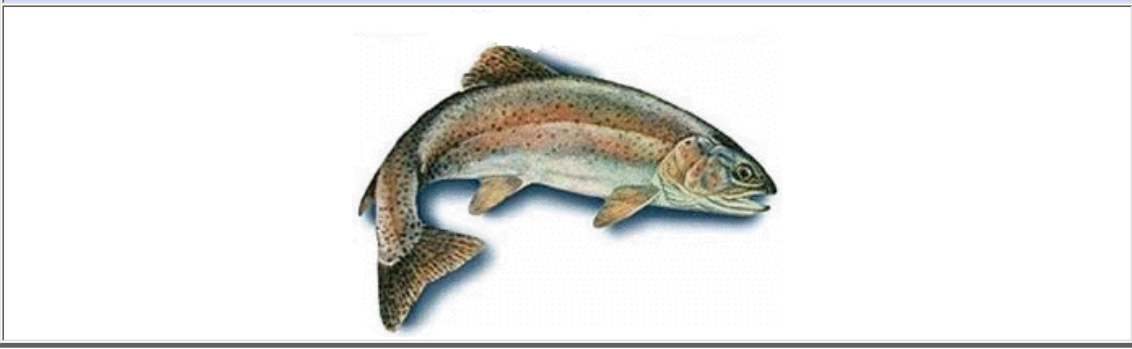
Where They Live	What They Eat
<p>In Lakes and streams where the water is cool and clean.</p> <p>They usually hide under a log or the stream bank. they are wary creatures that scare easily.</p>	<p>worms grasshoppers / crickets artificial flies artificail spinners</p>

## Brook Trout



Where They Live	What They Eat
<p>In Lakes and streams where the water is cool and clean enough for them to survive. They need cooler water than rainbow and brown trout.</p> <p>these fish are usually small and fairly fragile.</p> <p>They can be found hiding behind rocks, stick, and logs. You will have to sneak up on them!</p>	<p>worms grasshoppers / crickets salmon eggs artificial flies artificail spinners</p>

## Rainbow Trout



Where They Live	What They Eat



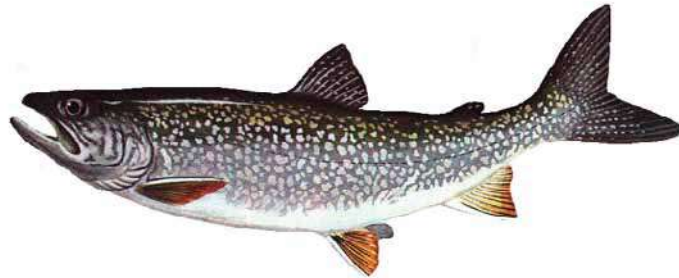
In Lakes and streams where the water is cool and clean.

In streams they will usually be found near the faster water in the cover of the rocks or logs.

Because of state stocking programs, trout streams will often be marked by signs.

worms  
grasshoppers / crickets  
salmon eggs  
artificial flies  
artificail spinners

## Lake Trout



### Where They Live

In the deep water of cold lakes, they may be very deep, so you will probably need LOTS of line on your reel.

In the spring, they spawn (*lay eggs*) in the shallow water and can be caught with artificial flies.

### What They Eat

artificial spoons  
artificial spinners  
minnows  
artificial flies

## TROUT in General

Trout today can be found in cold water streams, rivers, lakes and ponds throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Most are best in spring and fall, with Rainbows active in the summer as well. Golden Trout, found in the High Sierras at altitudes above 10,000 feet, are best in summer.

Spring and fall runs concentrate the most fish in pools, behind rocks and other obstructions or current breaks and beneath falls.

Deep cuts on the outside of a river/stream bend are also excellent. Lake and pond dwelling trout often roam in schools along drop offs (10'-40') and move into the shallows during the spring.

### Baits

In general, salmon eggs, spawn bags, worms, small minnows, wet or dry flies, 1-2" spinners, 1-2" crank baits, 1-2" spoons and bait rigs.

More specifically:

**Brook Trout:** Spring and fall with worms, small minnows, spoons and small plugs. Most popular method is wet flies, dry flies and streamers.

**Brown Trout:** Dry fly fishing, as these fish are active surface feeders.

Wet flies and streamers are also good. Worms and minnows best in early spring.

**Golden Trout:** Best method is fly-fishing with wet flies, streamers and small spinners. In late summer, dry flies are best and the best natural bait is a small minnow.

**Cutthroat Trout:** Wet or dry fly fishing is best in streams or rivers. In lakes, bait casting, spinning or trolling with spoons, spinners or plugs is best with small minnows also being good.

**Dolly Varden Trout:** Best method is spinning or bait casting with spoons or spinners. Streamers and wet flies take smaller fish with the best bait being small, live fish.

**Rainbow Trout:** For streams and rivers, the best method is fly-fishing with wet or dry flies and streamers. Bait fishing with worms or salmon eggs is good with trolling with spoons or spinners are best in lakes.

**Lake Trout:** Deep trolling with spoons and wire line. Early spring and fall fly fishing and spinning a possibility. They go deep in summer, 100 feet, and feed in the shallows during spring and fall.

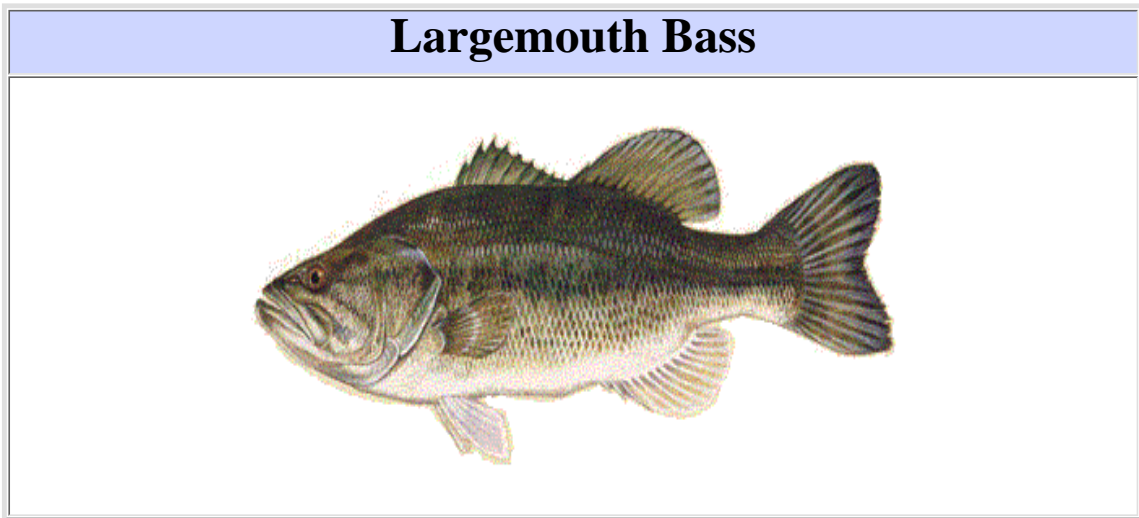
## Equipment

There are a wide variety of trout, sizes, wild and stocked. In general, spinning and fly fishing gear are best. Larger fish may require 6# to 10# line or leader. Smaller fish only require 2# to 4# line or leader. HOWEVER, 2# to 4# line/leader are almost always required in crystal clear water regardless of fish size. **Lake Trout** are much larger and require a deep trolling rig (bait casting) and wire leader. Common fish sizes: **Brook Trout**, 1/4-2 lbs.: **Brown Trout**, 1/2-4 lbs.: **Golden Trout**, 1/2-1 lbs.: **Cutthroat Trout**, 1/2-3 lbs.: **Dolly Varden Trout**, 5-15 lbs.: **Rainbow Trout**, 1/2-8 lbs.: **Lake Trout**, 5-20 lbs.

## Catfish



Where They Live	What They Eat
<p>Prefer really warm, slow water in rivers and lakes. They can be found on the bottom, so a weight and bobber will work great! Catfish like to feed at night so they use a sense of smell and touch to identify their food.</p> <p><b>WARNING: The dorsal and pectoral spines on a catfish carry a toxin that will irritate your hands. Use gloves when removing them from your hook!</b></p>	<p>minnows dough balls cheese (especially Limburger) crayfish</p>



Where They Live	What They Eat
<p>In lakes with warmer water. Usually found near the shore in weed beds, under lily pads or around sunken logs, trees and stumps.</p> <p>These fish are ferocious feeders, so when they take your bait they will give your rod a jolt!</p>	<p>worms crayfish crickets surface plugs artificial worms popping bugs artificial flies plastic worms spinners bug shiners and shiner minnows</p>

## Smallmouth Bass



### Where They Live

In streams with water slightly cooler than preferred by their largemouth cousins.

They like to be around rocks and boulders and will chase your bait before they take it, so, be patient!

### What They Eat

worms  
crayfish  
crickets  
minnows  
hellgrammites  
underwater plugs  
artificial spinners  
popping bugs  
artificial spoons

## Walleye



### Where They Live

They live in large lakes with hard, rocky bottoms.

If you can find a place where the edge of the lake drops off into the deep water - drop your line right there at the edge, DEEP!

### What They Eat

minnows  
worms  
spinners with worms  
jigs with worms or minnows

## Muskellunge



Where They Live	What They Eat
<p>Muskellunge's spend most of their time in the deep water of lakes, but they like to feed in the weeds.</p> <p>Most muskies are caught while trolling (<i>slowly pulling your lure along</i>) behind a moving boat.</p> <p><b>WARNING:</b> Be very careful removing a Muskellunge from your hook! Their teeth are very sharp!!!</p>	<p>minnows worms spinners with worms jigs with worms or minnows</p>

## Northern Pike



Where They Live	What They Eat
<p>A Northern Pike can be found in slow-moving streams and the weedy shallows of lakes, under logs and lilly pads and besides stumps. They are aggressive feeders and eat other forms of aquatic life. They even eat small ducks and muskrats.</p> <p><b>WARNING:</b> If you should happen to catch a Pike, be very careful removing it from your hook. It's teeth are very sharp and can cut your hands.</p>	<p>minnows frogs (<i>real or artificial</i>) large artificial plugs (<i>underwater and surface</i>) big spoons</p>

Bluegill

Crappie

Flier

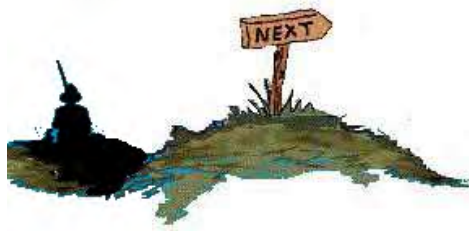
Sunfish

Red Breast Sunfish

Spotted Sunfish

# Red Ear Sunfish Warmouth

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## Lure Fishing

LURE FISHING is one of the most exciting ways of catching predatory fish. Pike, perch, bass, trout. . . there is an endless list of fish that will gobble these plastic, metal, or wood creations, mistaking them for real fish.

There are three types of lures. **Spinners** and **spoons** are usually made of metal and either wobble or spin through the water in the same way as real fish. **Plugs** are made of wood or plastic and work in a number of ways: along the surface of the water, in mid-water, or deep along the bottom.

When you are lure fishing, it pays to search the water and not stay too long in any one position. Big predators like slack water just off the main current, and some often lie right by the bank.

### *Pay attention to detail*

Predatory fish are eagle-eyed, and a good plug should resemble a natural fish very closely.

Look for realistic eyes, scale patterns, and a shiny finish.

### Working a lure

Never work your spoon, spinner, or plug in a mechanical, unthinking sort of way. Instead, try to make a big predator think that this strange wood, metal, or plastic creation is in fact a living, breathing, swimming prey fish!

Look out for all possible hiding places under fallen trees, among weeds, or along the bank.

Cast carefully and accurately, and constantly move the rod tip around to create a change of direction.

### *Spinners*

On a spinner, a metal blade rotates as the lure is pulled through the water. The rotation sends out vibrations and the blade catches the light, so the lure looks like a small fish. Sometimes tassels of plastic or wool are added to entice the fish further.



## *Plugs*

A plug is designed to look and move in the same way as a small fish, which often swims in distress. Plugs can be used for any d of water. Work them slowly in areas that might contain big pre



The Hunter is a Pike lure, designed to be fished slowly just off the bottom.

The Stingfish



dives rapidly when it is reeled in quickly.

The Heddon Torpedo is a surface lure



It's propeller whips up the water when retrieved

## *Spoons*

A spoon is a lure made of shaped sheet metal. When it is cast and retrieved from the bank, spoons wobble through the water and attract avid fish with their shiny finish and bright colors.

Their action depends on your style of retrieve, so wind in irregularly to make them look like fish in distress.



### **The Atlantic Spoon**



*Very effective when fished slowly.*

### *The* **Abu Atom**



*This lure catches and reflects the light as it is pulled through the water.*

### *The* **Heron**



*This is a king sized lure used for catching pike.*

## ***The best lures.***

**Most fish will bite a lure that looks like a minnow, crayfish (crawdada), or other living prey.**

**Spinnerbaits, crankbaits, and plastic worms work best for bass. Trout, pike and saltwater fish will hit shiny metal lures.**

**Use a tackle box or a utility box to hold your lures. Remember the hooks are sharp.**

**Fishing heavy cover, where the bigger fish normally live, use a plastic worm or a "jig and pig" (leadhead jig with a pork frog trailer).**

**Cast into the thickest area of the cover, let the lure drop, then shake the rod tip gently to coax a bite.**

**Topwater lures are the most exciting to fish.**

**These lures float on the surface. When fishing with a topwater, cast near the cover, let it set for several seconds, then twitch the rod tip so the lure works on**

the surface.  
When done correctly you will experience a  
**KA- SPLOOSH**  
the surface explodes as the fish bites your lure.

When fishing is tough or slow, try using a smaller lure. A 4-inch worm is a good choice. Rig the worm on a 1/0 hook with a BB-size split-shot weight attached to the line about 18 inches above the hook. Cast the lure out and wait for it to settle on the bottom. Work or reel it very slow. The weight will bounce on the bottom, causing the worm to dart in different directions.





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# Flyfishing

## Intro

Flyfishing is so fabricated as being difficult making it reluctant for many anglers to even give it a fair chance.

With the appropriate equipment and proper instructions, you should be able to cast the line reasonably well within a few hours.

Another misconception is that flyfishing is just for trout.

Virtually all species of fish can be taken on a fly.

Trout, steelhead, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, striped bass, salmon, walleye, blue gill, crappie, you name it, all come readily to a well-placed fly. Rivers, lakes, creeks, brooks, farm ponds, bays, streams and the ocean offer infinite possibilities for you to catch every species of fish imaginable.

Now that we cleared that up, let's begin.

Since most people are familiar with spin-fishing, Analogies between flyfishing and spin-fishing will be used to help you better understand what flyfishing is all about.

**When spin-fishing**, you cast a lure attached to a very thin line with a spinning rod.

The lure has weight and this loads the rod to propel it towards your target.

The fishing line is just along for the ride.

**When flyfishing**, you cast a flyline attached to a leader and fly with a flyrod.

The fly is almost weightless.

The leader it is attached to, which is usually around 9 feet long, is very similar to standard spinning line. This is attached to a flyline, which is usually about 90 feet long. The flyline is

made of a flexible plastic and is much larger in diameter than spinning line and much heavier. This attaches to the flyrod, which is usually between 7 and 10 feet.

When **flycasting**, the flyline provides the weight to load the rod and propel itself towards the target, with the leader and fly just along for the ride. It is very important to understand that you are casting the line, not the fly.

The line and the rod have to be matched to each other in order to work properly.

In **spinfishing** there is a large tolerance between what works and what doesn't.

You could put 10 pound test on an ultra light and 6 pound test on a saltwater rod and they would both work.

Flyrods and flylines have to be matched carefully, but we'll save these details for a little later in the section about

[Equipment](#).

The whole purpose of all of this, besides the grace and beauty of it, is to cast almost weightless flies and present them in the most delicate manner.

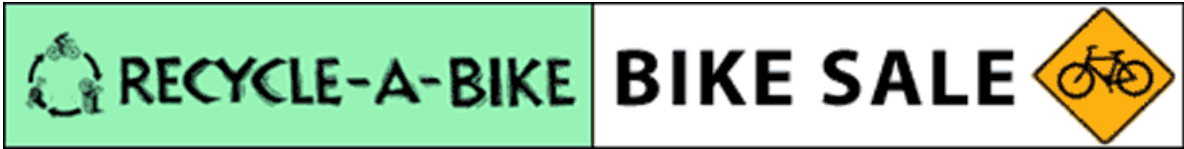
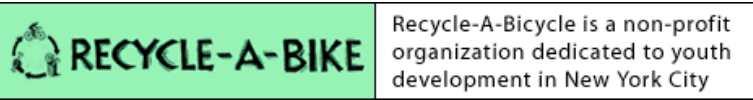
It would be impossible to cast most flies with any other kind of gear, and to match the delicate presentations you can achieve with a flyrod would be just as impossible.

This is why most people think of trout when they hear the word flyfishing.

The flyrod is the tool of choice for most trout fisherman, especially in streams. Trout in streams need to be fooled with realistic imitations of their usual diet. And most of their diet consists of small stream insects.

So now you might be wondering why you would want to use a flyrod on something like a bass that likes a big meal. The flyrod can still be more productive in certain situations because of the delicate presentation, but most people do it for the challenge and the joy they get from using such a marvelous tool.





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## Catch & Release

The future of sportfishing is in your hands.  
 Pass it on!

### Practice Catch & Release



Some fish are far too valuable to be caught only once. Many anglers now take only what they need for food and release the rest of their catch unharmed.

This is called "catch and release" and it helps to keep enough fish in the rivers and lakes for everyone to fish for.

**Here are several tips for practicing a successful catch and release.**

1. After landing the fish, try to keep it in the water as much as possible.

*Try to avoid removing the fish from the water.*

*Do not let fish flop about in shallow water, on the ground, or in the bottom of your boat.*

2. Use wet hands or wet cloth gloves to handle the fish.

Fish have a slime coating, which seals out infection. Rough handling can destroy this protection.

*Keep your fingers out of and away from the gills and eyes.*

**Never squeeze the fish.**

**Fish can not remain healthy out of water for longer than you can hold your breath.**

*Picture running a 4-minute mile, then someone sticks your head under water and tells you hold your breath.*

*This is what a fish goes through after a fight at the end of a line.*

3. Remove the hook from the fish's mouth. If the hook is deep in the

throat and cannot be removed easily, cut the line. The hook will usually dissolve or fall out later.

4. Have your partner take a picture of you and your catch.

### **QUICK SHOTS**

*Make sure the camera is ready and film is loaded before boating the fish. Nothing puts more stress on a fish than "sunbathing" on the deck, waiting for a slow poke to ready a camera. When the camera is ready, then lift the fish from the water and snap the shots you need and release the fish immediately.*

5. Release the fish back into the water -

### **never throw it.**

*Once a fish has been landed, quickly turn the fish upside down and more times than not the fish will immediately become disoriented and cease struggling. Removing the hook becomes a great deal easier and the fish is left in much better condition for the release to follow.*

Point your catch into a slow current, or gently move it back and forth until its gills are working properly and it maintains its balance. When the fish recovers and attempts to swim away, let it swim from your hands.

Large fish may take some time to revive.

### **Watch your fish swim away.**

It is a great feeling and you know others will have the opportunity to catch and have as much fun as you did!





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## Safety First



### Something over looked by many fisherman

Fishing isn't a dangerous sport, however you should prepare to keep safe and comfortable in the outdoors.

It is possible to get caught unexpectedly in bad weather, encounter insects, spend too much time in the sun, or get caught on a fish hook.

**Kids are adventurous, rambunctious, curious and fun loving. The result is that they naturally love the outdoors, but also have greater exposure to the dangers of the wilderness than the average adult.**

**Most kids don't have the patience for fishing that many seasoned adult anglers possess.**

**But with a little planning, preparation and patience on the adult's part, a fishing trip with kids can be safe and fun.**

**Safety must be the number one concern an adult has for children who are learning to fish and to enjoy the outdoors.**

It is important to try to foresee the potential dangers and plan for them.

Sun exposure, boating, water currents, slippery rocks, insect bites, snakebites, wild animals, fishhooks, poisonous plants, cliffs and weather are some of the dangers that provide adventure to the child and gray hairs to the parent.

Some areas even have traffic dangers that might not be too obvious, especially on or near mountain roads with blind curves.

Sunscreen, good sunglasses,  
life vests



*(when boating or if poor swimmers are fishing on a dock or near swift current),*

buddy systems

*(everyone travels in pairs or groups),*

safe insect repellent, emergency whistles, proper food handling and storage, adequate amounts of food and water, proper clothing, proper instruction, soap, a first aid kit and a watchful eye are all necessary to help keep an adventurous outing from ending in injury or tragedy.

Checking with the rangers or other authorities in the area where you'll be fishing can provide priceless, but free, information about local dangers and how to avoid them.

**The adult must know how to identify and avoid dangers in order to help a child avoid them.**

The adult must also know how to provide first aid in case prevention doesn't work and the child is injured or exposed to poisonous plants.

A very useful item for snakebites and insect bites is a syringe-style snakebite kit.

These kits have a syringe-like suction device that draws poison out of the same hole that a snake or insect injected the poison through, without any cutting.

They are quite effective and some have been documented to remove up to 75% of a poisonous snake's venom if used within the first minute after a bite.

Stinging nettles can be treated using wet sand to scrub off the invisible stinging hairs, followed by wet moss packed on the area for cooling and soothing relief.

Poison oak and poison ivy reactions can be prevented by immediately washing the area with soap and water and by spraying on a cheap aerosol anti-perspirant *(deodorant alone doesn't have the right ingredients)*. Juice crushed or boiled out of elderberry leaves and dabbed on the skin is the best medicine available to relieve poison oak or poison ivy after the reaction has already started, but the area should still be washed first with soap and water to remove the poisonous oil.

**With all of the safety and first aid products and information available, the most important thing for an adult to do is to be**

a good example of outdoor and fishing safety.

Watching one's step, wearing one's lifejacket in a boat, looking behind before making a cast, observing wildlife from a safe distance, wearing proper clothing, and other good examples all leave an impression on a child who is learning about the outdoors.

## **HOOKS**

When baiting hooks, keep a firm grip on the bait. The movements of slippery worms or minnows can cause serious hook injuries. Handle lures having clusters of double or treble hooks with special care.

When landing a fish, ease it out of the water into a net or onto the bank. Jerking a fish out of the water can result in wildly flying hooks, especially if the fish comes loose.

## **ON THE BANK OR SHORE**

Stay with your rod or pole. Protect curious children and animals from painful injuries by returning loose hooks and lures to your tackle box. Watch your backcasting clearance: avoid trees, bushes and especially people. **Help prevent erosion:**

protect grass and shrubs near the water's edge. If you dig worms, go back away from the water to do so. Be sure to level the soil and replace the sod afterward.

## **WADING IN LAKES OR STREAMS**

requires special care. Watch your footing. Look out for drop-offs, deep holes, slippery rocks, soft mud and quicksand. Always test the footing ahead and keep most of your weight on the foot already on safe ground.

Avoid wading through bank fishermen's lines.

Shoes should always be worn whether fishing on shore, in a boat, or

wading in the water.

Stray hooks, glass, sharp rocks, and other objects on shore and in the water could cut your bare feet.

In a boat, shoes designed to keep your feet from slipping in a wet boat could help prevent you from taking an unexpected dip into the water.

## Watch the weather

**In a storm, seek shelter on shore in a building or vehicle.**

### ***DON'T FORGET, ELECTRICITY LIKES WATER!***

Anything wet can conduct electricity, even your boots! A wet fishing line wrapped around a power line can kill you....the electricity can travel down the fishing line and through you. On shore or in a boat, avoid overhead power lines.

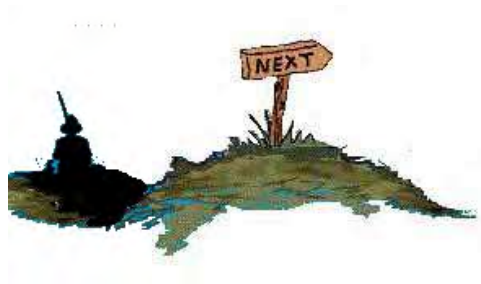


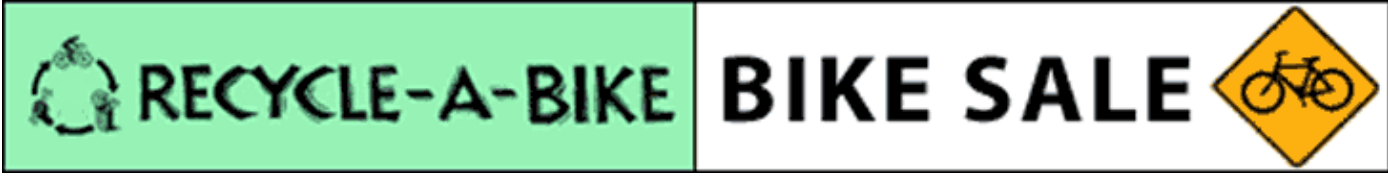
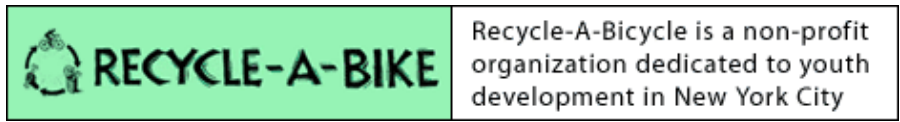
On the stream bank, don't cast near electric fences or power lines. Take a tip from the cows, stay away from electric fences! Watch sprinkling systems....those electric power users are another danger. Don't try to catch an animal in a pipe. Many people have been killed lifting the ends of pipes near power lines. If a rabbit, gopher, or snake crawls into a long aluminum irrigation pipe, leave it there. Don't try to dump it out. Never lift a metal pipe higher than your head.

[Fishing from a boat](#)

Fishing from rocky areas


Be SunSmart





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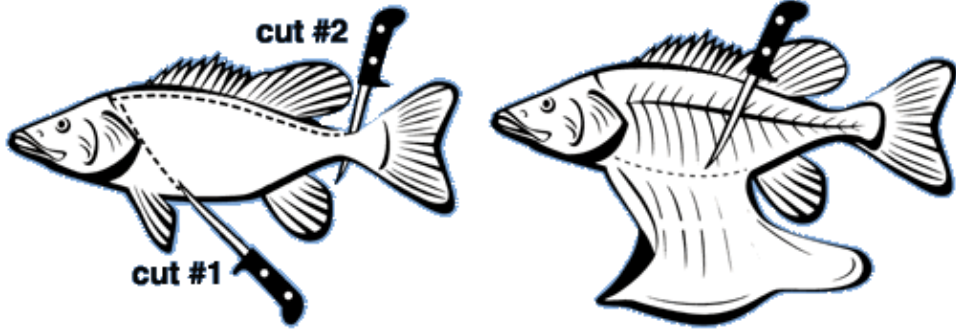
[Fishing Links](#)

# How To Fillet Your Fish

## Cleaning Your Catch

Cleaning fish is best left to adults as it requires a very sharp knife. The most popular method of cleaning a fish is to fillet it. With a sharp, narrow-bladed filleting knife follow these steps:

1. On a flat surface, hold the fish by the head and make a cut just behind the gill cover from the backbone down to just behind the front (pectoral) fin, being careful not to cut the backbone.
2. Then run the knife along the length of the back bone cutting close to, but not into, the rib cage, pulling the meat away from the bones as you go.
3. Next cut down through the fish behind the rib cage to the vent and run the blade close to the spine, all the way out to the tail. To remove the skin, lay the fillet skin-side down on a flat surface. Hold the tail tightly, and then run your knife blade away from you, cutting between the skin and the meat, the length of the fillet.



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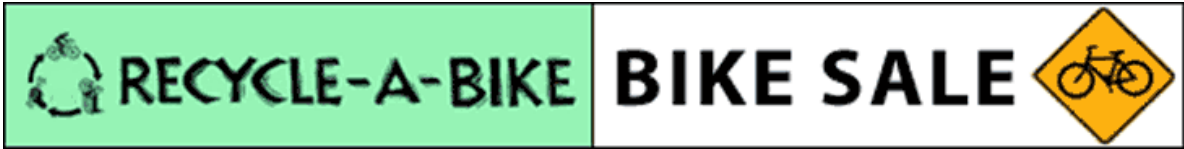
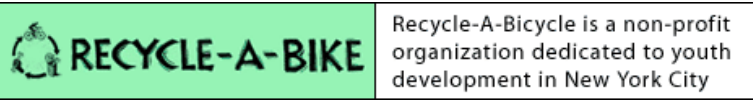
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# Fishing Terminology



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## A

**ABOARD** - On a boat.

**Action** (1) The act of dragging a fly across the current and giving it an unnatural drift.

(2) When fish are biting - Getting a nibble

**Adam's Special** A general, widely used dry fly pattern to imitate an adult mayfly.

**Adult** The final phase of an insect's life cycle, most often occurring above water for aquatic insects.

**Alphabet lures** Wide-body crankbaits that were originally fashioned from wood.

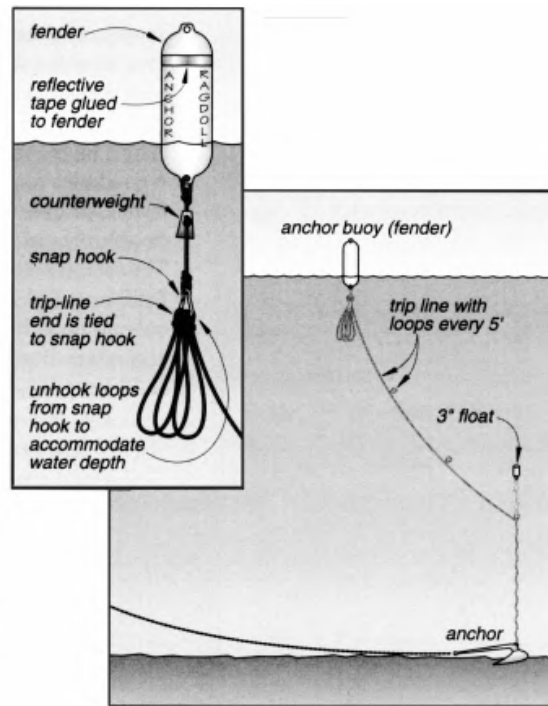
*Modern examples include Bomber Model A and the Cotton Cordell Big O.*



**ANCHOR** A heavy metal object that keeps boats from drifting.

**Anchor buoy** Usually a red plastic ball of at least 24 inches in diameter, with a large ring attached. Hook the ring on the anchor rope and heave the buoy overboard. Drive the boat upwind or upcurrent. Presto! The anchor is pulled up

quickly to the buoy using horsepower instead of human power.



**ANGLER** - Anyone who fishes with a using pole or rod and reel.

**Angling** Usually refers to the recreational catching of fish by means of hook and line; sport fishing; game fishing

**Antron** A synthetic yarn material made of long sparkly fibers used for many aspects of fly tying including wrapped bodies, spent wings, and trailing shucks. Is also used for dubbing material.

**Arbor** The size of the spool of a fly reel. "Large arbor" reels have large-diameter spools, which helps prevent a fly line from curling.



**AROMA** - A very special smell that is easy to notice.

**ARTIFICIAL LURE** - A man-made bait used to fool fish.

**Artificial Reef** Any material sunk offshore for the express purpose of attracting fish. Old boats, concrete culverts, metal pipe, the list is endless. Most states now require a permit before dumping because non-practical material was being used, objects that rusted quickly, polluted or were a hazard to shrimplets.

**Attractor patterns** Bright, bold flies that do not imitate any insect in particular, but many insects in general. Attractor patterns often provoke a trout's tendency to strike.

## B

**Back leads** A small device used to force your line down to the bottom. It is a small lead weight that is tethered to a stick pushed into your bank. The lead has a small open clip at the top on which you push over your line. The weight is then dropped down under the water, pulling the line down with it. When a fish strikes,



the line pulls up and out of the open clip.

**Backing** Thin, strong string that is attached to a fly reel to fill up the spool before attaching the fly line.

**Backing down** Driving the boat backwards (in reverse) while pursuing a fish.

**Backing Line** Nylon or dacron line tied between the fly line and the reel to act as additional line if a longer length than the flyline is required to play a fish.

**BACKLASH** - When fishing line gets tangled on a reel.

**Baetis** A small gray mayfly. [see Mayfly](#)

**Bait** little pieces of food you put on your hook to make fish want to bite it

Anything you use to catch fish. It can be a lure or a live minnow or a squirmy wormy, even a piece of ham will work.

**BAIT BUCKET** - A bucket used to hold bait.

**Baitcaster** Most common style of reel used in bass fishing, typically round or oval shaped and somewhat open construction. Also known as level wind reels.

[Click here for more info . . .](#)

**Balao** Pronounced "bally-hoo," this is the popular offshore bait used for trolling, most often for [billfish](#). The bait of choice for sailfish for many years. A pricey bait when used for other saltwater species.

**Ball bearings** Small metal balls added to the mechanical mechanism of high-quality reels to make the retrieve smoother. Normally the more ball bearings a reel has the higher quality.

**BALLYHOO** - A small shiny fish used for bait. [see Balao](#)

**Balsa** Type of wood several lures are manufactured from. This wood is very light, yet highly buoyant. Gives the lure great action. Examples include Bagley's Balsa B, and Rapala Minnows.

**BANK** - The raised ground next to a body of water.

**BARB** - A raised burr on a hook to keep fish from getting off.

**Barrel knot** A knot used to tie two pieces of tippet together -- also known as a [blood knot](#).

[Click here to learn how to tie a Barrel Knot](#)

**BASS** - A very popular game fish; fun to catch and good to eat.

[Click Here for  
More detailed info on a Bass fish](#)

**BASS BOAT** - A fast boat made for fishing on fresh water.

**BATEAU** - A small flat-bottomed boat, squared off on each end.

**BEACON** - A signal light used to help guide boats and airplanes.

**Beads** Glass, or plastic beads added to a Carolina Rig to enhance the noise, and protect the knot.

**Bead Head** A Bead Head fly uses a metal bead to simulate the thorax on a nymph or wet fly and to add weight to the fly. Typically gold or silver is used, but any color can be used. Often a bright color such as red can stimulate a fish into biting.

**Beds** Circular areas in the lake bottom that bass clear out in which to lay their eggs during the spawn. "The bass are on the beds" refers to the fish actively spawning.

**Bell sinkers** Sinkers shaped like a bell, which are normally used on a [Carolina Rig](#). Also known as casting sinkers.



**Belly** The middle section of a fly line.

**Belly strip** A strip of belly meat from a baitfish. Cut and trimmed in a streamlined fashion, it can be trolled behind the boat, where it flutters in a fashion enticing to gamefish.

**Billfish** Any of several species of pelagic fish, including sailfish, spearfish, blue, black or white marlin, and swordfish.

A fish with long jaws.

**Bimini Twist** A specific series of knots and twists in a leader which acts as a springy shock absorber in the line, usually used when fishing for large salt water fish.

**Biot** The short thick barbs from the leading edge of the first flight feather typically from a goose or a duck. Used to simulate tails, legs, antennae and other parts. Can be found dyed in many different colors.

**Birdnest** A tangle that can occur using a level wind, a newbies nightmare



When you cast with a Baitcaster reel and you don't put your thumb on the line before the lure hits the water, all your line will get tangled and make a huge mess that looks just like a bird's nest. Getting a birdnest is just part of fishing with a Baitcaster, everybody gets them.

**BITING** - Time when fish are being caught on hooks.

**Blank** Fiber glass and graphic fly rods (*which also have fiber glass*) are produced by wrapping sheets of graphite and fiber glass around a carefully tapered steel rod (*called a mandrel*). The hollow rod that results from this process is called a blank. It has no guides, ferrules or reel seat.

**Blood knot** A knot used to tie two pieces of tippet together -- also known as a barrel knot.

[Click here to learn how to tie a Blood Knot](#)

**BLOODWORM** - A worm with red juice inside that is used for bait.

**BLUEFISH** - A kind of fish caught in saltwater.

**BOAT** - A small vessel that is moved by oars, sails or engine.

**BOATHOUSE** - A building to keep boats

**Bobbin** A tool for holding a spool of thread while fly tying which allows the thread to be dispensed with a controlled tension.

**Bonk** To kill a fish.

**Boondoggle** Drifting your boat at or about the same speed as the current so one cast runs the entire length of the run.

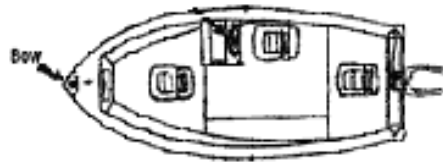
**Boot** Opposite of chromer. An old salmon or Steelhead. Well past edible, although often seen in the hands of a beek, claiming "this ones for the smoker".

**Bottom fish** Fish that spend most of their lives on bottom, such as cod, snapper and grouper.

**BOTTOM FISHING** - Fishing with the hook on the bottom

**BOTTOM RIG** - The hooks, weights and things fastened together for bottom fishing.

**BOW** - The forward (front) part of a boat.



**BOW RAIL** - The front railing on a boat.

**Brackish** Water that is mostly fresh, with some salt. The far ends of tidal creeks are mostly brackish, supporting sometimes fresh and saltwater fish.

**Braided channel** Usually found on freestone rivers, braided channels are ever-changing smaller channels that together constitute the course of the entire river.

**Brass** Materials used to manufacture several products in the marine industry since it resists corrosion. Also refers to sinkers made of brass, which are harder and noisier than typical lead sinkers.

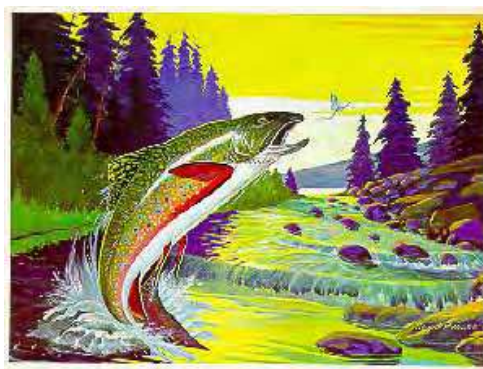
**Brats** Hatchery raised Steelhead

**Brook trout** Actually a member of the char family, small fish that inhabits the cold, clear waters of spring-fed streams and mountain lakes. Brook trout are popular as game fish because they are abundant and relatively easy to catch. Brook trout are greenish brown with red spots and wavy marks on their backs. Males have a red band on their sides. During spawning, the male develops a hooked

jaw and a red belly, and his fins may turn deep orange with black and white highlights.

Brook trout are native to Southeastern Canada and the United States north of Georgia.

Brook trout feed on aquatic and terrestrial insects, occasionally supplementing this diet with crayfish. Large brook trout may eat small fish.



**Bucketmouth - Largemouth Bass** - A black bass, body green-shaded with a broad, continuous dark stripe along each side, belly white to yellowish, dorsal fin almost completely separated between spiny and soft portion and lower jaw extends past the gold-colored eye. Also called bigmouth bass, green trout, green bass

**BUCKTAIL** - An imitation bait with feather or hair and a hook.

**Bullet** Same as a chromer - A bright, fresh fish

**Bullet Head Tool** A tool with a plate with several holes which can be pushed over the eye of a hook to arrange material in a bullet pattern. The material is first tied in facing forwards beyond the eye symmetrically around the shank, and then pushed backwards by the tool to form the distinctive bullet shape.

**Bump-troll** Keeping a trolled bait mostly in one spot, by pointing the boat into the current/wind and "bumping" the engines in and out of gear, to hold position.

**Buck** Male fish

**BUOY** - A floating marker

**Butt seat** A seat that is shaped in a sort of half moon design, which anglers often use to lean against while fishing. Also known as "Bike" seats.

This small bottom cushion is popular among fishermen who fish long hours.



**Bycatch** Non-targeted sea life caught by commercial fishermen. Tuna longlines have a bycatch of turtles or mahi-mahi, for instance. Shrimp nets have a bycatch of at least a hundred species of fish and crab, discarded overboard.



**Caddis** A general name for the dozens of subspecies of caddis flies found in trout streams all over the world. Also known as a "sedge," they are characterized by a tent-like wing. Caddis have four stages of development, from egg to larva to pupa to adult.

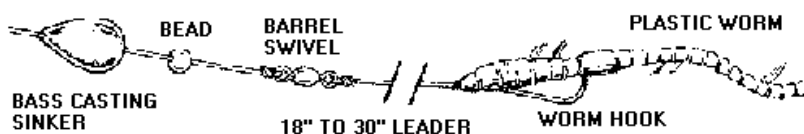
**CAMOUFLAGE** - A way to hide things and make them hard to see.

**CANE POLE** - A fishing pole made from a bamboo shoot.

**CANOE** - A long boat pointed at both ends that is easy to paddle.

**Cape** The skin off a rooster chicken's neck, which yields several hundred good fly-tying feathers from a quality cape.

**Carolina rig** A rigging method designed to present a soft plastic lure along the contour of the bottom. This rig consists of a main line with a heavy sinker, bead, then swivel. The swivel has a leader (1-6ft) to which a plastic lure is tied. Best lures include lizards, centipedes and French fries.



**CARP** - A kind of freshwater fish.

**Casting** a technique using a rod to throw your line, hook and bait into the water

**Cast net** A circular net thrown by hand. The outer perimeter is lined with lead weights. Great for catching shrimp and baitfish.

**Catch- and- release** Term that refers to releasing the fish you catch so that they can live to fight another day, and thus insuring a productive fishery.

The ethic of returning fish to the water unharmed.



*A conservation motion that happens most often right before the local Fish and Game officer pulls over a boat that has caught over it's limit.*

**[Read detailed info here on  
Catch- and- release](#)**

**CATFISH** - A kind of fish with whiskers.

**[Click Here for  
More detailed info on a Catfish](#)**

**Centipede** Four-inch straight plastic worm used for [Carolina rigs](#).

**cfs** Abbreviation for "cubic feet per second," the term is a means of measuring the flow of a stream. A small stream might carry 40 cfs and offer good trout fishing, while a large river like the Colorado might reach 30,000 cfs in the Grand Canyon during flood stage.

**CHANNEL MARKER** - Used to mark the safe edges of a channel.

**Char** A trout-like species of fish whose subspecies include brook trout, Dolly Vardens, and arctic char, among others.

**CHARTER BOAT** - A boat you pay to go out on.

**Chenille** A yarn-like material for wrapping bodies which is in the form of a pipe cleaner (with thread in place of the stiff wire). Can be found in many colors and materials, and is a critical component of the Woolly Worm and Woolly Buggers patterns.

**Chine** The "running edge" of a boat. The chine is the edge made by the joining of the bottom and the sides of a boat.

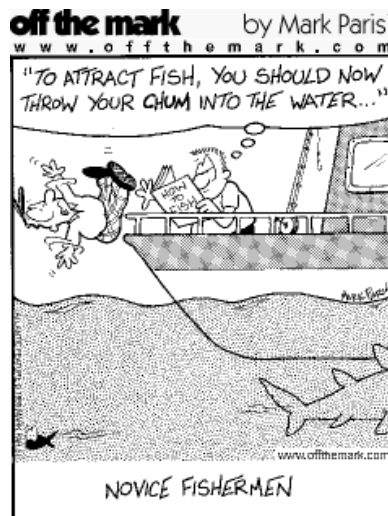
**Chironomid** Scientific name for the members of the Diptera family of insects commonly known as Midges. In the pupae stage they typically appear to be small aquatic worms.

**Choked:** Busted of a fish or did somethin dumb to lose your fish

**Chromer:** A bright, fresh fish - Also known as a **Bullet**

**Chugger** Topwater lure that "chugs" when retrieved, similar but smaller than a popper. Example, Storm Chug Bug.

**Chum** Chopped up fish, shellfish or even animal parts (for sharks), dropped overboard to attract gamefish.



**Chum bag** A mesh bag left hanging overboard, filled with chum. Trollers sometimes drag the bag alongside the boat. Smaller bags can be trolled deep while attached to downrigger balls.

**Chunk** Plastic or pork trailer commonly used on jigs.

**Cigar minnows** A yellow-tailed member of the scad family, sold most often as frozen bait in five-pound boxes, caught along the Florida Panhandle. Widely regarded for their firm texture and appeal to offshore fish. Cigar minnows can also be caught on tiny fly hooks, called Sabiki Rigs.

**Cinch Knot** (also known as *Clinch Knot*) A knot used to tie the tippet to the eye of the fly. A modified version of this, the Improved Cinch Knot, is probably the most used knot for this purpose.

[See how to tie a cinch knot  
along with other neccassry fishing knots  
by clicking here](#)

**Circle hook** A circular hook up to 16/0 size, very safe to handle. The fish hooks itself with this one, and the harder they pull, the more firmly the hook imbeds itself. Ideal for releasing fish, since the circle hook is seldom swallowed.



This functionally-shaped fishhook results in more fish being hooked. Fishermen are learning that the Circle Sea is catching 60% more fish than conventional J shaped hooks, including a 95% lip hook rate so the fish cannot escape. The Circle Sea hook is scientifically proven to reduce fish mortality. Hook set is not required. This hook has greater holding power, more hookups, fewer drop-offs and it holds bait better. Ideal for all freshwater and saltwater fish species.

*The trick is to let the fish take the bait, resist the temptation set the hook yourself, let the fish take it, eventually the rod will double and the fish will set them self. If you try and set the hook, the hook will not work properly and you will actually pull the hook right out of the fishes mouth. If you get too excited and set the hook you would pull the bait right out of the fishes mouth. You must resist as the reel screams out line...and the fish would hook itself.*

**Clacker** A metal device added to certain brand buzzbait in order to make additional noise.

**Clicker cork** A thin Styrofoam cork, 3 inches long, mounted on an 8-inch wire. Yanking on it produces a clicking sound that imitates shrimp snapping their tails underwater. These corks are great for suspending a plastic shrimptail jig above a grass bottom, and below troublesome floating grass.

**Clinch knot** One of 4-5 very useful knots. Very simple to tie, yet very strong. *also known as CINCH KNOT*

[Click here to learn how to tie a Clinch Knot](#)

**Clouser minnow** A streamer pattern that imitates baitfish, popular for many different species of fish, named after originator Bob Clouser.

**Clown** A color typically used mostly in hard jerkbait like Rogues. Consists of chrome body, with chartreuse back, and red head or face.

**Coastal pelagic** An offshore fish that migrates along the coastline, but isn't a true, ocean-going pelagic. Examples are kingfish, Spanish mackerel, cobia.

**Coffee Grinder:** [Spin cast reel](#)

**Colorado** Blade design used in spinnerbaits. Gives out a strong vibration. Blades are circular shaped.

**COMMERCIAL FISHING BOAT** - Used for fishing to earn a living.

**CORK** - Keeps a hook from sinking. Bobbles when a fish nibbles.

**Cover** Cover consists of weeds, trees, branches, tules, buck brush, stick-ups, rocks and man-made objects like docks, tires, etc

**Crankbait** plastic or wooden lure with a diving bill, that dives downward when retrieved or "cranked."



**CRAPPIE** - A kind of fish that is fun to catch and good to eat. Freckle.

[Click Here for  
More detailed info on a Crappie](#)

**CREEK** - A stream of water that is smaller than a river.

**CREEL** - A small basket with a carry-strap to keep fish in.

**CRICKET CAN** - Keeps crickets alive to use for bait.

**Crawfish** Small fresh water crustaceans similar to lobsters only smaller. A favorite food of bass. Also describes a reddish color used in all sorts of lures.

**Crimp sleeve** A metal tube, thin as two wire leaders together. When attaching wire or very heavy mono leader to a hook, one should use the crimp sleeve. A special, plier-like tool crimps the sleeve tight.

**Cross chop** Wind-driven waves and ocean swell colliding from two directions. Also caused by waves bouncing off a seawall and going back out, colliding with incoming waves.

**Crystal Flash** The trade name for a synthetic stringy material used in many streamer patterns to add flash and color.

**Cul- du- Canard Feather** In French, literally, "the butt of the duck," which is where these fine, downy, useful fly-tying feathers can be found.

Short wispy feathers taken from near the preen gland of a duck. Typically there are few of these feathers found per duck. These feathers add a significant amount of float to a fly due to the fact that they are soaked with natural preen oil. Use of floatant on these feathers will negate their floating qualities, actually causing the fly to lose flotation.

**Culling** Refers to releasing a smaller fish when you have a limit and have now caught a larger fish that will weed out one of the smaller ones. "This big fish will cull that small one&ldots;" is a phrase heard on The Bassmasters TV show often.

**Culprit worm** Although there are several similar worms, Culprit is the manufacturer of the original ribbon tail plastic worm, thus it is often referred to as a "Culprit "style worm.



**Cut** A narrow body of water cutting through land. For instance, a boat cut gouged through a barrier island, for boater access.

**Cut bait** Fish cut into chunks to fit the hook.

**Cuttbow** a rainbow/cutthroat hybrid, the cuttbow has both the rainbow's stripe and a cutthroat's "slash" under its jaw.

**Cutthroat trout** A native to many Rocky Mountain rivers, the cutthroat has a crimson "slash" under its jaw and black spots concentrated near the tail.

**Cutting board** Plywood surrounded by a lip of wood, sealed and painted. Or just an old piece of plywood. Used for cutting bait, and preventing knife cuts on



expensive boat gunnels.

## D

**DAM** - Used to hold water back. It usually makes a lake.

**Dead drift** A drift that imitates the natural action of an insect by floating directly downstream with the current.

**Deer Hair** Body hair from deer which is used in many fly patterns to supply body and floatation.

**DEPTH FINDER** - Measures how deep the water is under a boat.

**Deep-drop** Bottom fishing in deep water, from 500 to 1,100 feet and sometimes deeper. Usually, a sash (window) weight is required to reach bottom. [Circle hooks](#) are a necessity.

**Delta** Sediment deposited at the mouth of a major river, pushing shallow water offshore, as in the Mississippi Delta.

**DIP NET** - A net with a handle. Used to get fish into a boat.

**DNR** Department of Natural Resources

**Dock lines** Ropes used to secure the boat.

**Doe** Hen Steelies/Salmon

**Do-nothing rig** Western, clear water technique generally applied in deep water and on light line. Consists of main line with a small brass sinker, then a bead, and light wire hook. Baits are usually small 4-inch worms. The rig is dropped to desired depth and then just slightly jiggled or left to "do nothing."

**Doormat** Large flounder, roughly the length and weight of a doormat.

**Double haul** A casting technique where the angler pumps the fly line with the non-casting hand on the forward and backward segments of the cast. The pumping motion accelerates the line and gives the cast additional length. Double hauling is an essential technique for long casting.

**Double-tapered fly line** A fly line that is thicker on both ends and thinner in the middle. Double-tapered fly lines can be switched around as one end becomes worn.

**Downrigger** Used to slow troll most commonly for kingfish and grouper. Standard equipment on the kingfish tournament boats.

**Downrigger ball** Cannonball-shaped device with a fin, used to keep a trolled bait far beneath the boat.

**Downstream drift** The act of allowing the fly to drift past the fisherman and rise to the surface on the river below him, particularly on a nymph drift.

**Drag** When a fly line catches on a current, making the fly drift in an unnatural fashion.

Also the mechanical device on a fly reel that limits how fast a fish can strip line from the reel.

When you tighten the drag on your reel it makes the line harder for the fish to pull out and makes them get tired faster. But you have to be careful not to make it too tight or the fish can pull so hard your line breaks.

**Dredging** Retrieving a crankbait so that it continually digs or dredges up the bottom. This causes reflex strikes from fish.

**Drift anchor** Used most commonly in windy areas, by fishermen who drift all day. This anchor is more of an underwater kite that slows the boat's drift in order to thoroughly fish a productive area.

**Drift boat** Also known as a Mackenzie river dory, it's a river fishing craft ranging between 14 and 18 feet long with a flat bottom, upswept prow and rigid hull.

**Drift fishing** Drifting along with the wind and tide, casting repeatedly. Anglers working the grass flats off Florida, for instance, make one drift after another all day. Catch a few fish, and toss a buoy, to make an accurate drift through the same area. If Saturday crowds threaten to overwhelm the buoyed area, use a GPS to mark the spot for return.

**Drift sock** A large sock shaped like airport wind socks. This is dropped over the side of the boat to help control the boat in rough water.

**Drip bag** Very similar to an IV drip bag used by doctors, this device releases a constant drip of pokey oil over the side, attracting fish.

**Drop shot rig** Japanese designed technique in which the main line is tied to a sinker. The lure is tied to a leader which is tied above the sinker. This allows the lure to sit at the exact depth of suspended fish.

**Dropper** The secondary fly tied on the leader somewhere between the lead fly and the fly line.

**Dry fly** A pattern designed to imitate an adult insect, floating on top of the water.



**Dubbing** A wrapping to thicken the body of a fly, made by rubbing ground-up muskrat fur, rabbit fur or other substance onto a waxed thread.

A primary body ingredient in both dry flies and nymphs, dubbing is a chopped-up fibrous material pinched and twisted onto the thread for wrapping onto the fly. Also refers to the process of applying the dubbing material.

**Dubbing Rake** Tool used to tease out dubbing on a fly to give it an enlarged appearance.

**Dun** Term used to describe an adult aquatic insect following emergence from the water.

## E

**EARTHWORM** - A skinny worm that wiggles and makes good bait.

**Eddy** A calm spot next to a fast current, or in the case of a "back eddy," where the current switches direction.

**Egg weight** Egg-shaped lead weights of various sizes, with a hole drilled through the center. When a bottom fish runs with the bait, the line slides through the weight's hole, allowing little resistance and fooling the fish.

**Electronics** Commonly refers to the depth finders, and fish locaters used by anglers.

**Elk Hair** Body hair from elk which is used in many fly patterns to supply body and floatation.

**Emerger** An aquatic insect in the transition period from hatching off the bottom of the river to flying away from the surface of the water as an adult insect.

Often will have an attached trailing shuck which feeding fish may key upon.

**Estaz** Trade name for a chenille which uses colored fine plastic strips for the barbules. Can be found at many craft shops and yarn stores

**Estuary** Sheltered water, often with grass bottom or grassy shorelines, where juvenile fish have shelter, food and a chance to grow.

**Evening hatch** When many insects choose to emerge from under the water.

## F

**FADs** Fish Attracting Devices were first used centuries ago. Any large, floating object like a tree that attracts pelagic fish. Some are anchored; others are allowed to drift.

**False casting** Casting ever-increasing segments of line, or casting the same amount of line, keeping the line aloft in the air without touching the water.

**Fan cast** To cast in a manner that resembles the arms of a clock. Thus the angler is attempting to cover as much ground as possible.

**Fathom** Six feet of depth. Many nautical charts are marked in fathoms, not feet.

**Federation of Fly Fishers** A non-profit organization dedicated to teaching the sport of fly fishing and the improvement of fisheries.

**Felt soles** Most wading shoes for flyfishing are soled with thick felt for good traction on slick rocks.

**Ferrule** The joint where different sections of a rod fit together.

[Click Here for MORE detailed information on FERRULE](#)

**Fiberglass** Material used to make crankbait rods. Glass makes the rod less sensitive and more flexible, and reduces the chance of pulling a crankbait from a fish's mouth.

**FILLET** - A piece of fish with the bones removed.

**FIN** - The wings on the top, bottom, sides or tail of a fish.

**Finesse** Commonly refers to slowing down and using smaller lures, line, and rods. Also a style of small lures used for this technique.

**Fire tiger** Color scheme that involves a lure with green back, chartreuse sides, orange belly and black vertical lines on the sides.

**FISH** - A creature that lives in water and has fins and gills.

**Fish Hair** Synthetic hair used in tying streamers and salt water flies.

**FISHERMAN** - Anyone who fishes with a pole, net, gig, or trap.

**FISHING HOLE** - A place known to be good for fishing.

**Fishing line** Fishing lines serve as the link between the angler's reel and the lure or bait. The most popular fishing line used for sportfishing is monofilament nylon line, which is strong and durable and has a certain amount of stretch, which helps when an angler sets the hook. The line comes in a variety of strengths, from 2-pound test to more than 100-pound test. (Pound test is the amount of pressure that can be put on a line before it breaks.) Most monofilament is clear, making it difficult for fish to see.

Braided lines, such as Dacron and braided multifilament lines, are frequently used for a style of fishing called jigging-where anglers lower the bait to near the water's bottom and then move it in an up-and-down manner in a steady motion. These lines also perform well when an angler trolls, or pulls the line from behind a slow-moving boat. Dacron and braided lines are often thinner yet stronger than standard monofilament lines. These lines also have better casting capabilities than standard monofilament because they are heavier and less likely to tangle.

Fly-fishing lines are woven synthetic strands coated with several thin layers of plastic. The weight and thickness of these coatings create three distinct types of lines: lines that float, lines that sink gradually, and lines that sink rapidly. The lines come in different shapes, for different types of casting situations. A double-taper fly line, for example, has a small diameter for its first and last 8 m (25 ft), with a larger diameter throughout the rest of the line. Using double tapers when casting small flies enables anglers to place the bait on the water without the line disturbing the surface of the water and spooking the game fish. Weight-forward tapers (preferred by most anglers) have a larger diameter in the front section than in the rest of its length. This enables anglers to make longer, more powerful casts because during the cast the heavy line in front pulls the lighter line that follows.

Because regular fly line is heavy and difficult to cast in a gentle manner, fly-fishers attach a short portion of monofilament line, called a leader, to the end of the fly line. The leader is much lighter and smaller in diameter than the fly line. This enables the angler to cast the fly onto the water without disturbing the surface. It also provides an almost invisible attachment to the fly, which makes the fly appear natural and more appealing to fish. Some other types of leaders used with monofilament lines are made of heavy monofilament or steel. These leaders prevent sharp-toothed fish from biting through the line and also protect the lure from being torn off by sharp underwater rocks and coral.

**FISHING LICENSE** - A permit to fish. You must have a permit if you are over the age of 18.

**FISHING POLE** - A pole with a hook and line used to catch fish.

**FISHING TACKLE** - All the things used to go fishing.

[Pole](#) [Rod](#) [Reel](#) [Fishing Line](#)  
[Bait & Lures](#) [Live and Natural Bait](#)  
[Artificial Bait and Lures](#)

[Plugs](#) [Poppers](#) [Spoons](#) [Spinners](#) [Jig](#) [Crankbaits](#)  
[Hooks](#) [Sinkers](#) [Bobber](#) [Swivels](#) [Tacklebox](#)

**Fish pass** A cut dredged through a barrier island, created to allow better fish traffic and tidal flushing.

**Flashabou** Commercial name for a colorful synthetic filament material used in fly tying for adding flash to streamers as well as other patterns.

**Flats** Very shallow water, where water is still and easy to wade, usually with a sand bottom. This water is so thin, anglers equipped with polarized glasses can visually spot and cast to various fish, such as bonefish, redfish and tarpon.

Trout generally use flats only for feeding purposes because they feel vulnerable there. Also important for saltwater species such as redfish and tarpon that feed on baitfish and crabs.

**Flies** Artificial imitations of the aquatic and terrestrial insects found in and near trout streams. Flies are tied of many and various materials, such as feathers, fur, thread, tinsel, and even space-age materials. Patterns imitating minnows, baitfish and other fish and crustacean species are also called "flies."

**Flipping** Technique in which a short amount of line is pulled from the reel and raised vertically then lowered to the side of an object. Normally used in dirty water and in thick cover.

**Flipping stick** A heavy 7 ½-foot rod designed specifically for flipping. Normally these rods telescope down to a smaller size.

**Float** Style of lure that floats rather than sinks at rest.

*Example: wooden crankbaits.*

**Float Fishing** using floats help you catch fish that swim near the surface of the water

**Float tube** A one-man fishing floatation device for lake and slow river fishing that looks like an inner tube covered with a cloth mesh liner, seat, and back rest.

Similar to an inner tube in size and shape, a float tube is an inflated ring covered with a fabric structure with a seat and pockets for an angler to fish ponds and lakes. Also known as a "belly boat."

**Floatant** Material applied to flies and leaders in order to cause them to float on the surface of the water. Typically sold in liquid or paste form, although dry shake crystals have recently been found on the market.

A coating designed to keep a dry fly from becoming waterlogged.

**Floss** Material for tying flies.

**Floater** [\*same as float\*](#)

**Floating worm** Plastic worm used to catch spawning bass that actually floats on top of the water. Common colors include pink, yellow, and sherbet.

**Florida rig** A worm sinker that has a metal cork screw in the base so that the angler can screw in the worm. This keeps the sinker and worm together and reduces tangles.

**Flossing** Using really long leaders to float thru lots of stacked up fish, trying to hook the fish on the outside of the jaw

**Fluorocarbon** New style of line that is often invisible below the water's surface.

**Fly** An artificial lure hand tied with "stuff" on hooks.

**Fly Casting** The process of casting a flyline out onto the water.

**Fly Line** A weighted line which is cast out onto the water to deliver the fly to the desired location. Can be found in many densities and tapers.

**Floating Line** A flyline design to float on the surface of the water along its entire length. Typically used for dry fly fishing and shallow water nymphing.

**Sinking Line** A flyline design to sink below the surface of the water for getting a wet fly or streamer down deeper. Can be found with different sink rates for different fishing styles.

**Sinking- Tip Line** A hybrid flyline design which is floating for most of its length except for a short section of sinking line at the end.

**Fly Pattern** Recipe used for tying a specific fly.

**Fly Reel** A reel used to store line, provide smooth tension, or drag, and to counterbalance the weight of the fly rod during the casting process. Can be found in many different weights and with different drag mechanisms.

**Fly Rod** The type of fishing rod used to cast the flyline to the desired position. Historically built with bamboo canes and fiberglass, but now almost exclusively with carbon graphite.

**Fly Tying** The process of building fishing flies using thread and various materials.

**Flying bridge** A permanent, raised steering cabin or platform on the bigger fishing boats. On the big offshore charter boats, the captain stays up on the flying bridge all day, while the deckhands below scurry about, catching the fish.

**Flying gaff** A detachable gaff, designed for big fish. The steel hook is attached to a strong rope. The pole is used to jerk the hook into the fish, detaches, and the fish is suddenly attached to the boat by a rope.

**Football head** Design refers to the shape of certain jigs that resemble a football mounted side ways. Normally used in very rocky locations.

**Freestone river** A natural river with an undammed channel that allows free movement of stones rolling down the river course over time.

**French fry** Soft-plastic worm about 4 inches long. Resembles a crinkle-cut French fry. Used often on Carolina Rigs.

**Frog** Soft, tough plastic lure that swims on top of the water. Often used in thick, scummy areas.



**Gaff** A steel hook of varying sizes, mounted on a pole or stick, used for snagging worn-out fish that have been played to boatside by fishermen.

**GAME WARDEN** - A person in uniform (lwater police) who checks on fishing laws. Do you have a [permit](#)?

**GAR** - A long freshwater fish; not good to eat.

**Gear ratio** Retrieve speed of reel determines how much line is reeled in one revolution of the reel's handle.

**German brown trout** A native of the European continent, the brown trout has a

golden sheen and black and orange speckles with white rings around them.

**GIG** - A spear with prongs used to catch fish. **GILLS** - Slits on the side of a fish's head used for breathing. **GREAT OUTDOORS** - Being out in Nature. **GRUB WORM** - A fat worm used for bait.

**Golden rule** Gold color aluminum measuring device used in tournaments to measure bass in order to easily determine the length of the fish.

**Gong Show:** Also known as the "**gong**". A term that refers to a spot where fisherman stack up, usually close to the road. Lines are getting tangled and there is a disproportionate amount of anglers wearing camo getups.

**GPS** Global Positioning Satellite, device used to accurately determine your location with in feet. Handy for finding your way on unfamiliar lakes.

**Grand slam** Some notable angling achievement, usually three popular species of fish from a certain area. A flats grand slam would be a tarpon, permit and bonefish. A billfish grand slam would be a sailfish, blue marlin and white marlin.

**Graphite** Material used to make rods. Good conductor thus graphite rods are sensitive.

**Grass** Vegetation catch-all phrase. Refers to green plants growing in the water. Bass are attracted to the grass, which is home to prey.

**Green Drake** A large, green-bodied mayfly found in many trout streams, a particular favorite food for trout.

**Grinder** A device used to grind chum before tossing it overboard.

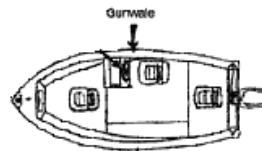
### **Grub**

1. A plastic worm tail usually threaded onto a jig hook. In saltwater fishing, "grub" covers all of the basic plastic shrimptail brands, one of the first of which was the Boone Tout Tail. Or, it might be a plastic minnow tail, such as the Sassy Shad.

2. Small curl tail lure made of soft plastic.

**GUIDE** - (1) An eyelet. (2) Person who is paid to lead others.

**GUNWALE (GUNNEL)** - The top of the boat's sides. The rail.



**Guts:** Roe, eggs



**Hackle** Any soft-stemmed feather with non-adhering barbules.

The series of extended fibers right behind the eye of a fly. The hackle is what allows a dry fly to float.

Typically used to refer to hen or rooster chicken feathers.

**Hen Hackle** Hackle feathers from a hen chicken characterized by soft, wide feathers. Since these feathers readily soak up water, they are usually used on nymphs and streamers.

**Jungle Cock** A type of hackle with prominent singular white dot patterns often used to suggest eyes.

**Neck Feathers** Feathers from the neck of the chicken which are shorter and tend to have a wider selection of sizes on a single skin.

**Saddle** Feathers from the back of the chicken which are longer and have thinner stems. Best choice for most dry flies.

**Herl** Feathers used for tying with long individual barbules each having short dense fibers. Typically from Peacock and Ostrich.

**HADDOCK** - A kind of saltwater fish that is good to eat.

**Hair jig** Old-style jighead with the skirt fashioned out of hair and/or feathers.

**HALIBUT** - A kind of fish that is good to eat. Flounder.

**Hawg:** A really big fish

**Headboat** A government fisheries term for partyboat. Basically a fishing boat for hire that carries more than six people. The average is more like 30 anglers, and sometimes more than 100. With that many lines, you mostly fish straight down with heavy tackle for bottom fish.

**HELM** - A tiller or wheel used to steer a boat

**HELMSMAN** - Person who steers a boat.

**HITCH** - A loop around an object then back around itself.

**Hen:** Female fish

**High-sticking** Holding the rod high to keep the line taut in a nymphing drift.

**Hog line:** Boats or bankies stretched across a river in a line

**Hone** To sharpen hooks or knives with a stone.

**Hook** - (1) A curved piece of metal; Pointed wire hook used to catch fish (*hopefully*).

*The most dangerous part of fishing equipment. At least one of these is tied to the end of the line, or is attached to a lure. There are more brands, types and sizes than anyone could ever use, but all anglers have dozens of them. Some can be sharpened, some can't. But they all get dull, or bent, and have to be replaced more frequently than razor blades.*

The size of the hook refers to the gap between the point and the shank. The length of the shank is referred to as 1XL for one extra long, or 2XL for two extra long and so forth. Assuming that the hook we are discussing is of regular length, and the hook is between size 2 and 28: the higher the number the smaller the hook, the lower the number the larger the hook, and hook sizes are represented by an even number. After size two, we use both odd and even numbers, and after size one we add a slash and a zero after the hook size like 1/0 or 2/0, and the higher the number the larger the hook. So the hooks run in size from smallest to largest like this: 28, 26, 24, etc..., 8, 4, 2, 1/0, 2/0, 3/0, etc...



For general trout fishing you will probably use sizes 6 through 20 the most. For panfish, sizes 10 through 16 are most common, however these are usually a little heavier and more wind resistant than trout flies. For bass you will use sizes 2/0 through 8 and these flies are even heavier and more wind resistant than most.



*A clever advertisement to entice a fisherman to spend his life savings on a new rod and reel.*

*The punch administered by said fisherman's wife after he spends their life savings (see also, Right Hook, Left Hook).*

**Hoppers** A good-sized live shrimp sold at the marinas, usually a white shrimp.

**Horse:** To force a fish in too fast... "he really horsed that one".

**Hula grub** Soft plastic curly-tailed grub, with a soft skirt type feature at the head of the grub.

**Hump** Section of the lake bottom that rises vertically toward the surface, or is shallower than the area around it. A submerged island would be considered a hump.



**Improved clinch knot** The suggested knot for tying a fly to the leader or tippet.

**INBOARD** - (1) Within a boat. (2) A boat with a built-in engine.

**Incoming tide** Water pushing inshore, generally caused by the moon's gravity pull. A strong wind blowing out to sea can somewhat negate an incoming tide, however.

**Indiana blade** Refers to a teardrop shaped blade used on spinnerbaits.

**Indicator species** A species of plants or animals that suffers when pollution or environmental stress begins, thus indicating environmental degradation.

**Inlet** A natural pass between ocean and bay. Unjettied inlets are more hazardous to boat traffic, because of shifting sandbars that can be a hazard.

*Most inlets are now jettied with granite rocks, to protect against erosion and to save dredging costs.*

**In-line** Commonly refers to in-line spinners where the blade, body, and hook are all in a straight line. Example is a typical Mepp's spinner.

**Inshore** A nebulous term that means perhaps within sight of land. "Let's head inshore" means moving the boat from offshore back towards land.



**JACK** - A kind of saltwater fish; fun to catch and good to eat.

**Jack plate** Device attached to the transom of a bass boat that allows the outboard motor to be mounted farther back and higher than originally. Improves performance. Example, Rite Hite Jackplate. Also used for shallow-running flats boats. This device jacks the motor straight up and down, without tilting the lower

unit, even while running.

**Jacobson downdrift** Feeding slack into the line as the fly emerges downstream to imitate an emerging insect.

**Jerkbait** There are two types: soft and hard. The soft style is similar to a baitfish profile and rigged with a large worm hook. Example: Slug-Go. Hard jerkbaits resemble more of a minnow baitfish. Examples are a Rapala or Smithwick Rogue. Both style lures are fished by twitching or jerking the lure forward, hence the name.

**Jetties** Granite boulders used to protect coastal inlets and passes from sand erosion. An inlet protected by jetties is much safer for boating traffic.

*The rocks attract many species of coastal fish.*

**JEWFISH** - A large saltwater fish; very good to eat. Grouper.

**JIG** - A kind of fishing lure used for jigging.

**Jigging** Working a jig. That means popping the rod tip up and cranking in some line with the reel, making the jig dart through the water. Very attractive to most fish species.

Fishing with short little jerks on the line.

**Jitterbug** Old wooden-body topwater lure with large metal lip. Makes a gurgle-type commotion when retrieved.



**KEEL** - The underwater backbone on the bottom of a boat.

**Keel guard** Handy device that is glued to the keel of a bass boat, so that it can be beached without damage to the bottom of the boat.

**Keeper** Any fish large enough to keep for eating.

Legal size bass. Example: In Missouri bass must be 15 inches long in order to be a keeper.

**KELP** - A kind of seaweed. Fish like to swim under it.

**Kelt:** A spawned out Steelhead on the way back to the Ocean, also known as a dropback, downriver

**Kicker** Larger, heavier bass that really helps out the total weight of a tournament angler's catch. Example: "I had a limit of 2-pounders, but was lucky and caught a 5 pound kicker."

**KIDNEY SPOON** - A fishing lure with an oval shape.

**KING MACKEREL** - A kind of saltwater fish; good to eat. Kingfish.

**KINGFISHER** - A kind of bird (waterfowl) seen around water.

**Kite rig** Fishing a bait with a kite. Fishing kites are different from land kites, usually flat and square. The live bait skips around on the surface, without the telltale line being visible. Used mostly on sailfish, but effective on other species.



**Lace** Hollow fine plastic tubing wrapped around a hook shank to supply a segmented body.

**Lagoon** Found mostly in the Pacific, lagoons are shallow, protected areas usually ringed by coral reef.

**LARGEMOUTH BASS** - Puts up a big fight and is good to eat.

[Click here more info on a](#)  
**LARGEMOUTH BASS**

**Larva** The second, or "worm" phase of an insect's life cycle.

Sub surface stage of development of an aquatic insect.

**LEAD** - A heavy metal weight.

**Leader** Section of line used between the flyline and the tippet. Often purchased as a tapered section, but can be assembled by tying successively smaller diameter sections of monofilament.

A strong wire or string used between a lure and the fishing line.

1. The piece of clear, tapered monofilament line attached to the fly line, usually between six and 15 feet long.

2. In bass fishing, a short piece of line attached to a swivel when making a [Carolina Rig](#).

**Lead fly** The primary fly tied on the end of a fly line.

**Leadhead** Bare leadhead jig that is normally used to rig a grub body onto.

**Leading** the act of keeping the rod tip and strike indicator downstream of the drifting nymph.

**Leech** A bloodsucking worm that trout love to eat.

**Lever drag** The serious offshore reels designed for ocean fish now use a very smooth lever drag, as opposed to the older star drag.

**Limit** Legal limit of bass, or other fish.

**Line** [see Fishing Line](#)

**Line memory** When a fly line, leader, or tippet stays in the same position in which it has been bent, tied, spooled, or coiled.

**Line weight** The relative weight of a fly line. A "1 weight" rod throws a thin, light line, while a "10 weight" rod throws a very heavy, thicker line.

**Lipless crankbait** Shad-shaped crankbait that has no visible diving lip. The line attaches to the top of the lure. Example; Rat-L-Trap.

**Lit up** Pelagic fish such as the marlins, sailfish and wahoo have a tendency to "light up" with neon, powder blue colors when excited or hooked.

**Live bottom** Rocky bottom, sometimes very flat, where sponges and corals can find something solid to grow on. This attracts various bottom fish, such as

**grouper.**

**Lizard** Soft plastic lures similar to a salamander. Used for Carolina Rigs, and fishing shallow water in the spring.

**Locators** Common nickname for depthfinders since they will often display images of fish as they pass over them.

**Longliner** As seen in the movie, The Perfect Storm, longliners are commercial fishing boats with a huge spool of heavy monofilament line on their back deck, up to 40 miles long. Used mostly for targeting tuna and swordfish.

**Loop** The candy-cane pattern made by a fly line as it is cast. The tighter the loop, the more accurate and powerful the cast.

**Loop Connection** A method of setting up a flyline/leader rig using loops tied in each section which can be interlocked for easy changing.

**Lowholed:** When someone steps in front of you as you move down a drift, or sets up their boat in front of you or your boat.

**Lunker** Big or large-size bass. Also known as Hawg or monster.

**Lunker Lure** Original designer of the buzzbait. Many anglers still refer to all buzzbaits as "Lunker Lures."



**Lure**

**Lure retrievers** Heavy devices designed to knock loose or retrieve snagged fishing lures.



**Mangroves** The only trees that grow in salt water. Mangroves protect tropical coastlines from storm surges, and their extensive root system attracts a variety of shallow water gamefish.

**Matching the hatch** Choosing the fly pattern that imitates the insects that are hatching nearby.

**Mayfly** The most beautiful of aquatic insects, the mayfly is characterized by an upswept wing and long, delicate two- or three-stranded tail. The mayfly goes through three stages -- egg, nymph, and adult -- then metamorphoses once again from a sub-imago adult to a spinner.





**Meat Hole:** A spot where "fisherman" gather because the fishing is so good, even the biggest fool can get fish at the "meat hole". Usually lots of guys ripping sides trying to snag fish.

**Mending** The act of lifting the fly line off the water and flipping it either upstream or downstream to eliminate drag and accomplish a more natural drift.

**Merging currents** A dead spot of calm water created where two currents come together.

**Midge** A very small species of aquatic insects found in trout streams. Many species of midges hatch into adults in the middle of winter. They have four stages of development, from egg to larva to pupa to adult.

**Milk:** To play a fish too long

**Minnow** - Any of several small fish less than a specific size and not considered gamefish.

**Mojo rig** Technique similar to a Carolina Rig except that it is rigged on a spinning rod. Thus it is a finesse-type method. The sinkers are cylindrical or pencil-shaped to come through rocks without snagging.

**Mono leader** Leader made of monofilament. Mono leaders are of course heavier grade than the line on your reel. Standard mono leader for huge marlin, for instance, is 300-pound test, while line on the reel seldom exceeds 80-pound test.

**Monofilament** The clear style fishing line most commonly used by anglers.

**Motor fish** When fishing over a tiny spot that is deep, it is more practical to keep the engine running, attempting to "hover" the boat over the spot. For instance, the tiny rocks in the Gulf of Mexico, no bigger than a car, are often 200 feet deep. Anchoring here is impractical and time-consuming. Instead, you motor over the boat, while a couple of anglers drop their baits down.

**Muds** Created by a bottom-grubbing school of fish. For instance, a school of bonefish rooting on the bottom will gradually muddy the water in a large patch, easily visible on a sunny day.

**Mysis** A type of silvery freshwater shrimp found in cold mountain lakes and reservoirs.

**N**

**Nail Knot** A knot used to tie together two lines of significantly different diameters. *See also Needle Knot*

**Nail Knot Tool** A tool used to simplify the process of tying Nail Knots.

**Nates:** Native steelhead, not of hatchery origin

**Nymph** A general term used to describe the subsurface forms of aquatic insects prior to emergence. Also used as the name of flies imitating these insect forms.



**OARLOCK** - A U-shaped holder that keeps an oar in place.

**OARS** - A long pole with a blade used to row or steer a boat.

**OUTBOARD MOTOR** - A removable engine for boats.

**OUTRIGGER** - Long poles to hold trolling lines out to the side.



**Palmer** A method for wrapping a hackle feather over a section of the fly's body.

**PAN FISH** - The size fish that just fits inside a frying pan.

[Click here more info on](#)  
**PAN FISH**

**Peacock Sword** A feather from a peacock with bushy herl-like barbules, commonly used for tails.

**PERCH** - A kind of fish, fun to catch and good to eat.

[Click here more info on a](#)  
**Perch**

**PDF** Personal Floatation Device, *aka*, a life vest or life jacket

**PIER** - A platform that goes from the land out into the water. (*dock*)

**PLASTIC WORM** - A flexible, colored, plastic worm with hooks.

*You fish these real slow, pulling your pole up and down waiting for a fish*

**PLUG** - An artificial bait used to catch fish. A lure.

**POINT** - Where land sticks out into a body of water.

**Point Fly** The lead fly in a two fly rig. Usually a section of tippet is tied to the eye or the bend of the hook to connect to the dropper fly.

**Poly Yarn** A synthetic yarn made from polypropylene. Used in fly tying, often for parachute posts and wings on dry flies.

**Pool cue:** Stiff action rod, undesirable

**Popper** Artificial lure with a flat head and surface. Designed to run on the

surface when retrieving or trolled which creates a lot of water surface distortion to attract predator fishes

**PORT** - (1) The left side of a boat when you face forward;

**PORTHOLE** - A small round window of a boat.

**Practice plug** A practice plug is like a lure without hooks. You tie it on your line and it lets you practice casting in your back yard or at the park so when you do go fishing you won't catch a bunch of trees, or your dad or other stuff that is not very good.

**PREDATOR** - Catches and feeds on other animals.

**PREY** - Something being hunted to be eaten.

**PULPIT** - A strong guardrail around the bow or stern.

**Pupa** Sub-surface larval stage of aquatic insect development.



**REEF** - An underwater ledge that sticks up from the bottom.

**REEL** - (1) A spool to wind line on. (2) Winding the line up.

**RELEASE** - Letting a live fish loose to swim away.

[See Catch and Release](#)

**Ripper:** Hard fighting fish, makes your reel "scream"  
[see screamer](#)

**Ripping Sides:** Purposely setting the hook every ten feet during your drift with the intent of snagging a fish by the belly/ass/fin.

**ROD** - A fishing pole with eyes for line to pass through.

**ROD TIP** - The eye at the end of a fishing pole.



**SALT WATER** - Ocean water. It has salt and many other minerals.

**School of Fish** A school of fish is a bunch of fish playing together, kind of like all the kids in your class playing on the playground. But unlike the kids in your

playground, all the fish in a school are going the same directions and when one turns, they all follow-like instantly!

*I don't know how they know whose turn it is to change direction, but they seem to know.*

**Screamer:** Hard fighting fish, makes your reel "scream"

**Schmeg:** The stuff an egg fisherman gets all over his waders, rods, reels, vest, rocks around him, trees around him, and all over the boat.

**SCHOOL** - A group of fish swimming together.

**Scud** Term used for freshwater shrimp.

**Seine** A large fishing net made to hang vertically in the water by weights at the lower edge and floats at the top

**SET THE HOOK** - Giving a quick tug so the fish gets caught.

When you feel a fish biting your lure you need to jerk your pole real hard, that is what setting the hook is.

This hooks the fish real good so he won't come off.

**SHACKLE** - A U-shaped metal fitting with a pin across the "U".

**Sinkant** A liquid applied to flies to make them sink.

**SINKER** - A weight made from lead attached to the rig to hold it in position due to strong current or used to cast the line out further. Commonly found types are bomb sinker, bullet sinker, ball sinker and split shots.

The maximum sinker weight for casting are usually specified on the rod.

**Sinking Line** A flyline design to sink below the surface of the water for getting a wet fly or streamer down deeper. Can be found with different sink rates for different fishing styles.

**Sinking- Tip Line** A hybrid flyline design which is floating for most of its length except for a short section of sinking line at the end.

**Skunked:** Failure to produce any fish on a given day

**Slinky:** Parachute cord filled with buckshot, used for weight.

**Snagger:** Can't get one the fair way, loves to set the hook at the end of every drift.

**Snakes:** Pink rubber worms

**SNAP SWIVEL** - A metal wire clip with a swivel.

**Spinner** A spent adult aquatic insect following laying its eggs on the surface of the water.

A small blade that spins when it moves through water.

**SPINNING REEL** - Usually used for casting and inland fishing. Unlike the multiplier, the spool does not turn unless a pulled with pressure on the line by a sizable fish. Line is reeled in by method of using a bale arm rotating around the spool which coils the line evenly.

**SPINNING ROD** - A rod made to be used with a spinning reel.



**SPLIT SHOT** - Small weights to squeeze onto a fishing line.

**SPOON** - Artificial lure originally made from a spoon with the handle cut off and attaching a treble hook to it. These metallic lures are now manufactured in various sizes and shapes, some designed like a fish.

**SQUALL** - A sudden storm with wind and rain.

**SQUARE KNOT** - A double knot. Also called a reef knot.

**STARBOARD** - The right side of a boat.

**STERN** - The rear part of the boat.

**Stonefly** Family of aquatic insects commonly imitated in fly fishing. Many species are found in western streams.

**STRINGER** - A cord or chain to keep caught fish on.

**Sweet Jigging:** Same as [ripping sides](#)

**SWIVEL** - Lets a line spin without twisting it up.

A strong connection between the mainline and the leader to eliminate line twist. Made from brass or stainless steel and comes in various sizes. It can be bought attached with a snap clip or on its own.



**TACKLE** - All poles, lures, and lines to fish with.

**TACKLE BOX** - A box to keep fishing things in.

**TERMINAL TACKLE** - The hooks and sinker on the end of a line.

**Terrestrial** Term used to describe land-based insects which are often food for fish.

**Tighten the Drag** When you tighten the drag on your reel it makes the line harder for the fish to pull out and makes them get tired faster. But you have to be careful not to make it too tight or the fish can pull so hard your line breaks.

**Tinsel** A metallic filament used in fly tying to provide flash and color.

**Tippet** The monofilament section of the fly rig between the leader and the fly.

**TOP- WATER POPPER** - A lure that floats and makes noise.

**Trailer Hook** When you are fishing with a spinnerbait or a buzzbait and you keep missing the fish, you need to put on a trailer hook. A trailer hook is a hook that you put on the hook that is on your lure and now you have two hooks to catch the fish instead of one. Sometimes, you can catch two fish at a time instead of only one.

**Trailing Shuck** A section of synthetic yarn tied to the back of a fly to imitate a case being shed from an emerging insect.

**TREBLE HOOK** - Three hooks made together.

**TROLLING** - Fishing behind a moving boat.

**TROLLING LURE** - A fishing lure used while trolling.

**TROLLING MOTOR** - A small, quiet, outboard motor.

**Trout Unlimited** Non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and improvement of trout fisheries, with an emphasis towards wild trout.

**Tyee:** Chinook over 30 pounds

U

V

**Vise** The tool used to hold a hook in place while tying the fly.

W

**WALLEYE** - A kind of fish that gives a big fight. Good to eat.

[Click Here for  
More detailed info on a Walleye fish](#)

**Weekend Warrior:** They dress the part and flock to the rivers in their new waders and Sage rods on the weekends to 'escape' from the everyday stresses of a crappy office job, usually get skunked.

**WET FLY** - An artificial bait that looks like a fly and sinks.

**Whip Finish** A knot used to tie off the thread when finishing a fly.

**Whip Finishing Tool** A tool designed to make whip finishing quick and easy.

X

Y

Z

**Zinger** A retractable string clip used to connect tools to ones fly vest.

**Zipperlip:** Secret fishing hole.

**Z- Lon** Trade name for a synthetic yarn used in making carpeting. Can be used for many purposes in fly tying such as nymph bodies, spent wings, and trailing shucks.



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(learn how to hit, pitch, field, etc. How to Coach, Parent info, Official Rules)



## Fishing Links

[411Fishing.com](#)

Fishing directory with guides, reports and tips.

[Abc of Fishing Directory](#)

Directory containing links to information on all the most popular fishing searches.

[Active Angler](#)

Complete with fishing articles, tips, maps and recipes.

[American Fishing Guide Service](#)

Directory of state fishing guides.

[Angler Vista](#)

The fishing search engine for the coarse, game and sea angler.

[Anglers Passport](#)

Fresh and salt water trophy adventures coordinating guides, lodging and resorts around the world.

[Anglinglinks.net](#)

Directory of angling sites, both fresh and salt water.

[Atlantic Panic](#)

East coast US fishing directory.

[BassBoat Central](#)

Bass boat directory with manufactures, owners and reports.

[BigFishTackle.Com](#)

Fishing Resource center and on-line anglers community.

[Bootin Rayz Fishing and Outdoor Directory](#)

Fishing and outdoor links that help the avid angler tackle the big fish with classifieds, message board, e-mail, graphics, animations and a directory.

[Cal/North Marine Publishing](#)

Boating, fishing and diving directory for Northern California.

[Canadagoes.com](#)

Canadian fishing.

[Charter Captains and Guides of the Great Lakes](#)

Fishing Wisconsin, Canada, Michigan, Illinois, New York, and Indiana.

[Charternet.com](#)

Directory of flyfishing, sportfishing, charters, powerboating, and sailing, along with listings for marinas and travel accommodations.

[Charters4Reel](#)

Directory of saltwater and freshwater charters.

[Combat Fishing](#)

Providing fun and information for the recreational angler.

[CyberAngler](#)

Articles, fishing reports, guide listings and tournament information for Florida.

[Discover The Outdoors.com](#)

Listings of all 50 states' regulations, featured lakes, tips from the pros, detailed species profiles and quality illustrations, numerous methods and techniques to improve your catch.

[European Online Fishing Network](#)

Fishing resource for techniques, freshwater fish species and all level of fishers.

[Find the Fish](#)

Includes charters and guide listings for all states, resources, forum, fishing web site design services, reports and resources for charter businesses.

[Fish Across Florida](#)

Features fishing guides, charters, and reports from across the state.

[Fish the Web](#)

Directory of angling related websites throughout the world.

[Fish the World](#)

Provides fishing reports and weather information worldwide.

[Fish-camp.com](#)

Directory of fishing guides.

[FishEyeSoup](#)

Fishing reports, articles, photos and trip destination information.

[FishHoo](#)

Fishing search engine and directory.

[Fishin' Report](#)

Covering the west coast and Mexico. Reports, weather conditions, fishing news and photos.

[Fishing - The Colorado Directory](#)

Listing of professional Colorado outfitters, guides & fishing areas.

[Fishing Destinations.ca](#)

A site designed for those planning a fishing trip.

[Fishing East Texas :: Guide to Fishing East Texas Lakes](#)

A Business Directory, Calendar of Events, Fishing Forums, News to keep you informed, Reviews, Personalized Weather for your area.

[Fishing for Charters](#)

Fishing charters guides for parts of North America and the Caribbean Islands.

[Fishing Guides Home Page](#)

Directory of fishing guides and charters for the United States, Canada and other countries. Links to State and Province regulations, licensing, weather, USGS Streamflow, and NOAA Tides.

[Fishing in the Northwest](#)

Covering all types of fishing in the Northwest, with information, links, message forum and fishing reports.

[Fishing Lodges Network](#)

Searchable database for lodges in the United States and Canada.

[Fishing Reports](#)

Search for and add salt or freshwater reports by area; also includes a directory of guides and news.

[Fishing Trip Planner for British Columbia](#)

Here you can find details of 300+ fishing spots, including depth charts, driving directions, fishing reports and even nearby accommodations.

[Fishing Works](#)

Fishing information resource with tackle, boats, tides, marine weather, search engine, message boards and classifieds.

[Fishing World Network](#)

Information on the sport of fishing.

[Fishing.us](#)

Fishing portal for recreational and professional anglers, with articles, product reviews, fish facts, news, and directory.

[Fishing-Boating Online](#)

Directory of charter captains, tackle shops, manufacturers, and related information.

[FishingChartersUnlimited.com](#)

Your one stop shop for all your fishing.

[Fishingspots.net](#)

Resource for fishing and camping across the USA.

[FishingtheUSA.com](#)

Guide to the fishing Canada and United States, organized by region, with fishing reports and message boards.

[Fishing-The-USA.Com](#)

Directory of fishing guides, charter boats, bait and tackle shops, marinas, lodging and boat storage.

[Fishingtravel.info](#)

Features a search engine with links and articles about fishing in several countries.

[Fishresource.com - North America's Premier Online Angling Resource](#)

A complete and comprehensive online resource for freshwater fishing in North America

[Fishseekers.com](#)

Database of links for fishing, boating, diving, aquariums, and marine biology.

[Fishy Fishing](#)

Fishing search engine and directory.

[Fishy Links](#)

Listings for charters, guides, tackle, manufacturers, and just about anything else related to fishing.

[Fly Fishing Club Directory](#)

A simple fly fishing club finder for fly fishing enthusiasts.

[Free Fishing UK](#)

Directory of Free Fishing sites within the UK for coarse and game fishing. Fishing without paying for a day ticket.

[FUNdamentals of Fishing](#)

Features basics of learning how to bait, cast, and fish. Includes terminology.

[GiantFish](#)

Information and links on pike, bass, muskie, trout, walleye and catfish.

[Gorp Fishing Directory](#)

Resource for freshwater and saltwater fishing.

[Greatlakesfishing.com](#)

Information source for charter boat fishing on the Great Lakes.

[Guidefinder.com](#)

A database of hunting and fishing guides for trips all over the world.

[Hooklinks](#)

Angling Links, articles and photo gallery.

[Hot Spot Fishing](#)

Find good fishing spots in this fishing community with reports, forums, tips, contests and trip information.

[How To Fish](#)

How to fish, fishing tips and tricks and "how-to" articles.

[HuntFish.net](#)

Directory of guides, outfitters and related links.

[Internet Sportshow](#)

Search engine styled directory exclusive to hunting, fishing and outdoor adventure travel.

[IWantToGoFishing](#)

Directory of fishing resorts and lodges.

[Kayak Fishing](#)

Kayak fishing directory, classifieds and information resource for freshwater and saltwater fishing.

[Key West Outdoors](#)

Your Key West information guide for Key West fishing reports, flats fishing, offshore or deep sea fishing, diving, snorkeling, sailing, fly fishing, dolphin watch, kayaking and more.

[Lake Erie Sport Fishing.com](#)

Fishing reports, bait shops, boating needs, charter service, entertainment, food and lodging information.

[Land Big Fish](#)

Resource center for anglers in North America.

[MrRiver.com U.S. Fishing Information](#)

Current Fishing Reports and Information for rivers & lakes in the U.S. Find lakes & rivers, boat launches, marinas, tackle shops and more in your state. Fishing Equipment & Unique Quality Fishing Gifts also. Check us out!

[NETFISH.NO - Guide to sports fishing](#)

Internet portal for fishing. Features an eMagazine.

[North American Fishing Guides](#)

Categorized listings for guides and charters in North America.

[Northern Ontario's Outdoor Network](#)

A comprehensive listing of lodges, resorts, camps, and campgrounds in Northern Ontario. From Kenora to Red Lake down to Rainy River. Fishing reports by various lodges are also included.

[Online Fishing Licenses](#)

A sportman's portal for online fishing licenses and links to each state's Department of Conservation web site.

[Online Fishing Links](#)

Fishing links and websites.

[Online Lake Fishing Guide](#)

The Midwest fishing and lake informational site offering a lake database, fishing reports, articles, tips, and tactics. Now covering Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan and Ohio.

[OntheWaterFishing.com](#)

Fishing articles, forums, pics, tips and techniques, reseller, e-shop, movies, eGallery, and much more.

[Outdoor Resources Online](#)

A directory index of fishing related web sites.

[OutFishing.com](#)

Fishing directory featuring travel, guides, lodges, shopping and an extensive photo gallery.

[Pack Lite Pro](#)

Planning software and recipes for outdoors trips. Offers a software program to help outdoors people plan their trips successfully and also has a collection of delicious recipes.

[ProudAngler.com](#)

Fishing resource for freshwater, saltwater and flyfishing.

[QuickBrochures Fishing Resort Directory](#)

Download brochures, maps, and rate information from fishing resorts and lodges in Alaska, Lower-48, Canada, and Belize.

[RBF Education Web Directory](#)

Directory of aquatic science, boating and fishing education resources for educators, natural resources professionals, and the general public.

[ReelCharters.com](#)

Search for fishing charters and guides.

[Resources for Anglers](#)

Fishing information and resources.

[Sporting Adventures](#)

Information source for hunting, fishing and outdoors tips and tricks.

[Sportsman's Resource](#)

A directory of fishing web sites for lodges, guides, outfitters, associations and charters.

[Take Me Fishing](#)

Guide for charter fishing.

[The Avid Angler.com](#)

Online resource for multispecies anglers in the Great Lakes region.

[The Fisherman's Guide to the Guides](#)

Provides a reference for saltwater and freshwater fishing guides and party boats available on the internet.

[The Fishing Directory](#)

Comprehensive database directory of tackle shops, charter boats, coarse fisheries, game fisheries, specialist suppliers and UK holidays.

[The Fishing Zone.co.uk](#)

Help and get help with fishing related subjects. Site includes fishing forum

[The Game Fishing Link Page](#)

Directory of fishing sites from the UK and around the world.

[The Guided Fishing Resource Center](#)

Directory for fishing guides, charters, lodges, reports and related topics in North America.

[The Hardcore Fisherman Fishing Directory](#)

Directory of links for fly fishing, bass fishing, deep sea fishing, etc.

[The Outdoors Page](#)

Outdoor news, fishing tips, links and bulletin boards.

[The Ultimate Fisherman Network](#)

Community for fishing enthusiasts includes fishing links and forums.

[The Weedbed](#)

Fishing search engine and directory.

[The Where to Fish Directory](#)

Fishing information service with details for the UK and abroad. Includes game, sea and coarse fishing, fishing search and classifieds section.

[TheFishFinder.com](#)

Fishing directory and search engine with recipes, pictures and articles.

[TheFishinGuide.com](#)

Directory of fishing guides, charters, lodges & marinas for the United States & Canada.

[Time4fishing.com](#)

Directory of charter boats on the Atlantic coast of the United States, classified ads, fishing services and weather.

[TrekOut's Fishing](#)

Fishing information including fishing guides, charters and lodges throughout North America.

[Ultimate Angling Ltd](#)

Ultimate Angling specialises in offering worldwide angling holidays.

[Up North Outdoors](#)

Features fishing equipment, tournaments, reports, guides, tips and techniques, chat, taxidermy, boats and electronics.

[US Charter Boats](#)

State by state listings of charter boats.

[USAngler.com](#)

Listing clubs, guides, resorts and fishing reports and reference materials.

[Waders On.com](#)

Angling and fishing guides.

[World Wide Fishing](#)

Directory of charters, guides, fly-fishing outfitters and lodges.

[Worldwide Fishing Safaris](#)

We specialise in tailor-making your holiday package suiting your budget and species you wish to target. Our aim to ensure that you are a satisfied and happy travelling angler

[Wotzits](#)

UK fishing directory.







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Fishing In A Brook

Lawson Drinkard

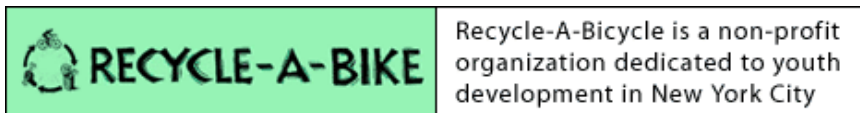
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BIKE SALE



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# FUNdAMENTALS

# OF



*An activity in which people live temporarily in the outdoors.*

Never camped before?

You don't really know [where to get started?](#)

Family camping or for those first time campers, just getting ready to spend time enjoying the call of the wild can be an intimidating prospect.

However, with just a little planning your first time out - and subsequent trips - camping can be a joy.

Not to worry with technical matters!

You won't in actual fact need to invest in a four-season ultra light tent, a sleeping bag rated to 50 below zero, and a stove so light that you don't even know that it's in your pack.

Let's deal with the basics and how to enjoy just one or two nights away from your home.

In the process, we'll cover the things you'll need to take along and how to use them, some ideas for meals and activities, and even a few do's and don'ts.

Hopefully this site will help with all your questions and introduce you to a new adventure in inexpensive vacationing.

*Some of the best pointers towards Camping you will find, comes from observing other Campers camping around you.*

Did you know that there are [campgrounds](#) near almost every major attraction in the United States?

**Why pay those outrageous hotel bills when you can camp inexpensively and give your family an adventure at the same time?**

**However, the benefits of camping with your family go further than affordability.**

**In today's world, it is difficult to find a large block of time to really focus on your family, your partner, and your children.**

**Even when we set aside a weekend, telephone calls, errands, and household chores intrude.**

When you are camping you will know what true togetherness is as a family. There are no phones, televisions,

or

appointments to be rushing off to.

Since you are sleeping outdoors, the sun wakes you up early and you can start a nice [campfire](#) first thing in the morning where everyone will gather together for breakfast.

You will be spending most of your time outdoors, enjoying the beauty of nature and the fresh air and there is plenty of time for just plain talking to each other.

It is a great opportunity to get back in touch with nature and each other and is also one of the most inexpensive vacations your family will enjoy and remember for a long time.

Camping and excursions into the wilderness offer enlightenment that only comes from engrossing into the outdoor environment and letting go of ALL thoughts of the city.

Just relax and pay attention to your senses and a whole new world opens up before you.

Where do forest rangers go to "get away from it all?"  
-- George Carlin

Today people move at the speed of light, and most do not have the time to stop and look at the beauty that encompasses the miles of concrete in which they live.

There is nothing more glorious than watching the sun rise over a wooded lake, and nothing cleanses the soul like a breath of fresh air in the forest.

Duties at work or home seem to diffuse with the musty scent of the earth and the clean refreshing smell of a lakefront.

And if you have the means to take your kids, by all means, do so! You can then show them that there is more to life than T.V., Playstations and Gameboys or what their friends tell them.

**The best advice for any parent would be to start kids camping as soon as possible.**

**There is no substitute for family camping trips. Some are downright fun; others do a better job of building patience.**

**Experiences are the part of memories.**

**If the child is given the opportunity to share the richness of such endeavors,**

**it will forever change them for the better.**

Camping with children can be one of the greatest experiences you can have if you plan the trip properly.

One of the most exciting things about camping with children is seeing things through their eyes.

Camping with children can be a great way to introduce young ones to the wonders of nature.

By camping with children when they are young, you will set them on the path to a lifetime of camping adventures.

The outdoors is a great natural classroom. It offers unlimited opportunities for learning about every facet of life.

Outdoor activities contribute immensely to the mental and physical well being of children.

Exercise is invigorating and exposure to nature is relaxing. For you, the outdoors is an escape from the stresses of everyday life; for your kids, it's just plain fun.

Be sure to take a camera and lots of film on all of your trips. Shoot plenty of photos.

Some of the best times are spent looking at photos and recalling that sudden thunderstorm where you played "Go Fish" for three hours in a pup tent, or the time a child caught *their first fish!*

The memories of good times spent together in the beauty of the outdoors will be kept and cherished for a lifetime.

*Camping with children isn't just a good way to learn about nature together.*

*It's a wonderful way to learn about each other.*

[More Tips](#)



[Camping with Kids](#)

Camping provides an opportunity to experience nature firsthand. Campers participate in [fishing](#), swimming, canoeing, boating and tubing, plant study, bird and wildlife watching, nature photography, much - much more!.

**Just as importantly, camping helps people escape the stress of city life.**

# Take a break from the normal rhythm of life . . . kick back on a camping trip.

*Just Go!*

The best time to start enjoying the outdoors is right now.

Throughout this site you may come across these icons:



This Icon will indicate that the information following pertains to Backcountry Camping.  
*(Extreme camping, in the back woods, no modern facilities, etc.)*



This Icon will indicate that the information following pertains to Pay Campground Camping.  
*(modern facilities, etc.)*

This site is geared mainly towards Family Camping in Pay Campground Sites, therefore, if there is NO ICON besides the information you are reading then it pertains to Pay Campground Camping

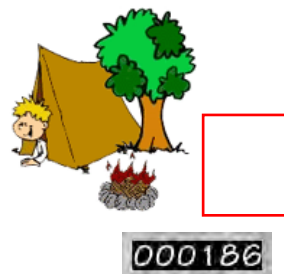
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Hopefully, you will find everything you need to get you started in the right direction in this site!

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Welcome to **BROOKSIDE**



# LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL

updated April 27th, 2004

"Where children's fun comes first"

There is so much baseball here, you can almost taste the peanuts and cracker jacks.



"Little League is a program of service to youth. It is geared to provide an outlet of healthful activity and training under good leadership in the atmosphere of wholesome community participation. The movement is dedicated to helping children become good and decent citizens. It strives to inspire them with a goal and to enrich their lives towards the day when they must take their places in the world. It establishes the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play."

Quote of the day:

"Improve Your Practice! Improve Your Game!, thats our motto. We want every player, coach, director and parent to love and enjoy the game of baseball as much as we do!

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jontanderson@juno.com



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President of Brookside Little League: Jon Anderson

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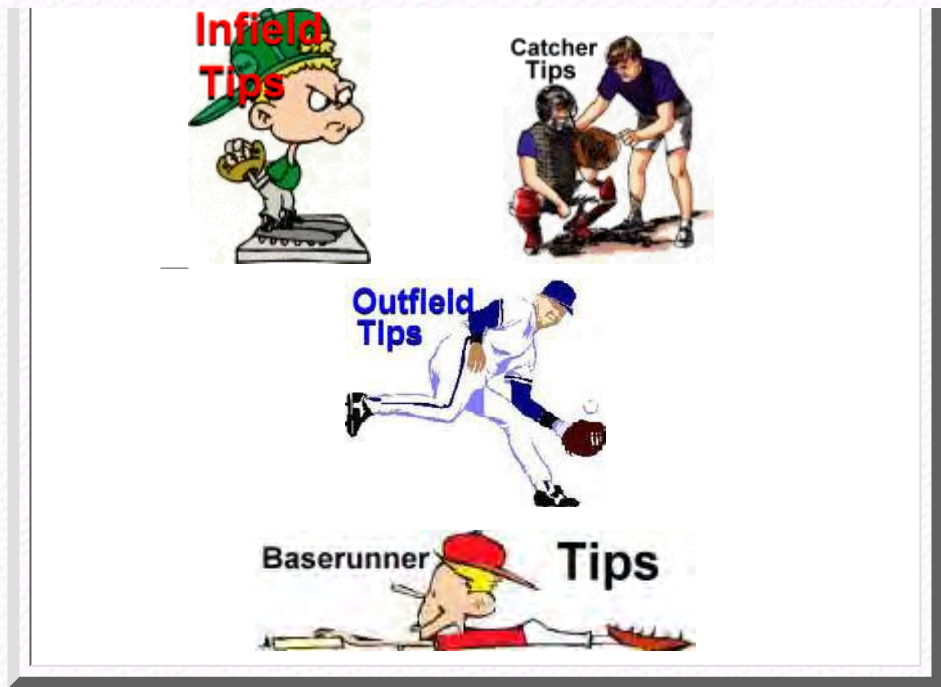
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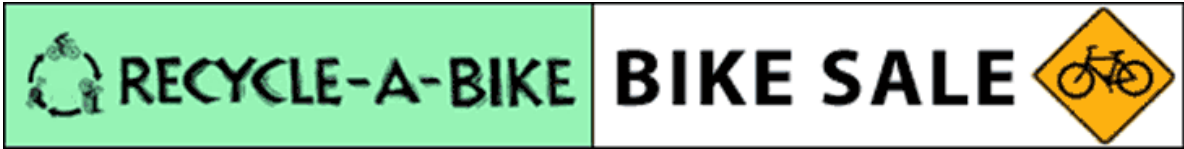
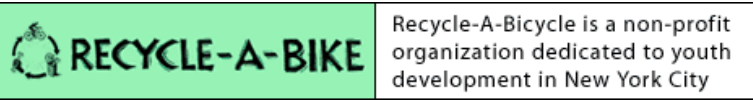
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## Introduction to Fishing

Fishing can be done in fresh water or salt water.

*Fresh water fishing takes place in lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams.*

Fish in these waters include trout, bass, and many other species. They range in size, from fish as small as 5 lb bluegills to as large as 100 lb king salmon.

*Salt water fishing occurs in oceans, estuaries, and tidal rivers.*

Fish found in these waters tend to be larger than average freshwater fish. They include snappers, bonefish, striped bass, and tuna. Fish as large as 150 lb sailfish and tarpon, and 500 lb marlin, can be found.

The three most favored methods of fishing in both salt and fresh water are:

**bait fishing**

*(the use of live or dead bait placed on a hook),*

**spin fishing**

*(the use of metal or plastic lures)*

and

**fly- fishing**

*(the use of feathered lures resembling either insects or small fish)*

In all three methods, a fisher chooses a rod, a reel, and line of an appropriate weight and strength.

Lures are chosen that imitate the game fish's prey.

Once the angler has walked, waded, or boated to an area where fish are found, he or she casts the bait, lure, or fly into the water and then reels it in.

If a fish attacks the bait, the angler attempts to secure the hook in the fish's mouth by

**setting the hook**

that is,

***The second you feel a tap on the line lower the rod tip, reel up the slack and sharply jerk the rod upward lifting the rod in a quick, powerful motion so that the hook lodges in the fish's mouth.***

The fishing rod bends and the reel releases line when the fish attempts to flee, but when the fish rests, the angler can bring it closer by reeling in the line. When the fish is brought close enough, the angler captures it with a net or other tool, such as a gaff.

*Related Article:*

## Fighting Your Fish

If the fish is not to be kept for food, an angler will examine it for a few moments (always keeping it underwater), unhook it, and release it.

[see Catch and Release](#)

The best fishing occurs in spring and fall, when fish are most active, either searching for prey or reproducing. Although they may be caught during winter and summer, fish are generally more sluggish then and less apt to chase an angler's lure.

### **Several other factors influence fishing.**

Water temperature is important, as different species are more active at different temperature levels.

Also, if a fish's natural prey is nearby, that fish will be active. Some fish, particularly in salt water, move to different areas depending upon the phase of the moon and the levels of the ocean tides.

Weather affects game fish activity, as fish are more likely to search for food before and after bad weather, when the water is disturbed.

## **Fishing Hot Spots**

**Normally fish will hide around cover.**

**Cover can be anything from weeds, trees, logs, and rocks.**

**Don't be afraid to cast into this good stuff. Most strikes will occur on the drop, when the lure passes by the cover, or bumps into the cover.**

**You may lose a few lures when fishing cover but you're bound to catch more fish.**

**Vary the retrieve speed to make the lure look more realistic.**

*Fish concentrate in key areas in the water. Fishermen call these honey holes. Below are some examples of places you may locate while fishing. You could stumble upon your own honey hole.*

**WEED BEDS** - Bass, bluegills, walleye, pike and muskies all love weeds growing in the water. Weed beds provide protection and food. The weeds are also home to minnows, crayfish, frogs, or shrimp that the larger fish feed on. Weeds filter the water from impurities and add oxygen for the fish to breath.

**Best lures:** jig and pig, plastic worm, spinnerbait, and topwaters.

**WOOD AND ROCKS** - Wood (sunken trees, stumps, dock pilings, etc.) and rocks are found in most fresh water or saltwater fishing holes. Fish lurk around these types of cover for shelter and for ambushing prey. The slimy coating, or algae, that grows on this cover attracts minnows and smaller fish.

**Best lures:** jig and pig, crankbait, spinnerbait, and plastic worm.

**RIVER MOUTH** - The area where a river or creek flows into a larger body of water can be excellent for fishing. The flowing water carries the food to the waiting fish. For many fish species, the river acts as their spawning grounds (reproduce). The fish will hold in this area in the Spring until the time is right to move upstream. Temperature differences between the river and the large body of water meet in this location, creating a perfect temperature condition for many fish.

**Best lures:** Spoon, crankbait, spinnerbait, and topwaters.

**DROP-OFFS** - Better known as a sudden depth change. These areas provide fish with a simple way to move from deep water to shallow water, or vice versa. This area can be a good place to find pike, muskies, bass and many saltwater fish far from shore.

Bait and fish tend to hold to an edge or ledge (under water) as food gathers in

these areas.

**Best lures:** spinnerbait, spoon, plastic worm, and jig and pig.

**Piers** - Piers and various other types of structure, offer protection for all types of fish. Structure with weeds will also attract bait fish, which in turn attract larger fish.

**Outside of Bends** - Bends in a lake offer more shoreline and if there is a current, will carry fish.

*Bends in a river offer fish an opportunity to get out of the current and wait for bait to come to them.*

**Underwater Weeds** - Weeds offer food and protection for smaller fish. The smaller fish attract the larger ones.

**Coves** - Coves offer more shoreline, protection from wind to fish. Whenever possible, coves should be fished!

*Treat coves and narrows as you would a point. After all, a cove is just the opposite of a point.*

**Lily Pads** - Lily Pads are another great spot because bait fish eat the insects and proteins on the lily pads. For this reason, larger fish are attracted to these areas. Lily pads also offer protection in the form of shade.

**Boulders** - Large boulders offer protection for all types of fish.

*They also offer ambush areas as baitfish usually take cover in the rocks.*

**Shade** - On hot days, try the shade. Fish may find this a more comfortable environment.

**Overhangs** - Overhanging tree limbs offers fish protection and shade.

**Be sure to fish these areas well!!!**

**Cliffs** - Cliffs offer deep water and protection

*Sheer cliffs will probably continue down into the water. This causes the deep water against the cliff.*

**Points** - Points are great ambush areas. Work both sides and the tip of these.

*Points act as barriers to wind and current.*

### **Steep Banks**

Steep banks-Expect to find deeper water towards the shore. Banks may also offer cover in forms such as rocks and weeds. Look at the bank to get a good idea of what's under the water.

### **Islands**

Islands are good spots to fish because they offer cover and ambush areas for predators.

Be sure to fish around the entire island to see if they're concentrating on one side. Use that information to guide you in fishing other structure.



## When is the Best Time to Go Fishing?

**Anytime!**

**Best times to fish are  
6 a.m. to 10 a.m.  
and  
4 p.m. up to 6 p.m.**

But if you're looking for a particular fish, here are the months that these freshwater fish are easiest to catch:

**CATFISH:** *Mid-April to mid-October. June and July are best.*

**CRAPPIE:** *March to May*

**LARGEMOUTH BASS:** *March to June*

**STRIPED BASS:** *All year...especially November to February and June to September*

**SUNFISH:** *May to June*

**TROUT:** *November to December and mid-February to mid-April*

**WALLEYE:** *Mid-February to mid April*

**WHITE BASS:** *Mid-March to May*

When you arrive at the water, don;t just start fishing in the first place you find!



Some spots will be more likely to attract fish to feed than others.

**Scout the area and look for signs of feeding activity.**

*A shallow weed-filled bay could be lurking with Pike.*

*A dead tree in the water may catch you some Carp or Perch*

*Lilly Pads and Weed beds are favorites of Bass*

*An island with overhanging trees could land you some Carp*

*Bubbles appear on top of the water could be Carp or Bream on the bottom*

Bodies of water like rivers and even lakes have moving water. **The crease** is the area in water where the fast water meets the slow water. Look for the line on the surface that separates rippled water from calm water. The crease actually goes right down into the water.

It pays to remember that water is a three dimensional object. Fish often are found to swim in the calm water right next to a crease, facing in the direction of the water flow. This is so that they can conserve energy and pick up any food that is brought past them in the fast flow.

Always try casting near the crease when fishing. You can often find some extra fish waiting there.

When you have found a promising site,  
set yourself up

**QUIETLY!**

Fish can detect vibrations of your footsteps and clanging noises of tackle boxes, etc.

Cast your bait out using the technique in [How to Cast](#).

Next, turn the reel crank forward until it clicks to prevent more line from coming out. To take up any slack in your line, reel the line in until the float begins to move.

Once you see the bobber move, or feel a tug on the line or your bobber goes underwater,

be sure to set the hook in the fish's mouth by giving the line a quick jerk that's hard enough to move the float and set the hook in the fish's mouth, *but not so hard that you send the hook, bait and/or fish flying over your shoulder.*

After you set the hook, keep the line tight and your rod tip up. Slowly reel in the fish until you can pick it up with your hand.

**Now you need to decide what to do with the fish.**

Is it large enough to keep? Will it be used for food?

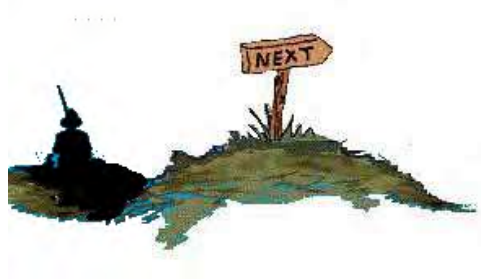
First, check the fishing regulations to be certain the fish is legal to keep. If it's not, carefully [release the fish back into the water](#), being sure to handle it with wet hands, and as little as possible. A fish that you catch and release carefully can be

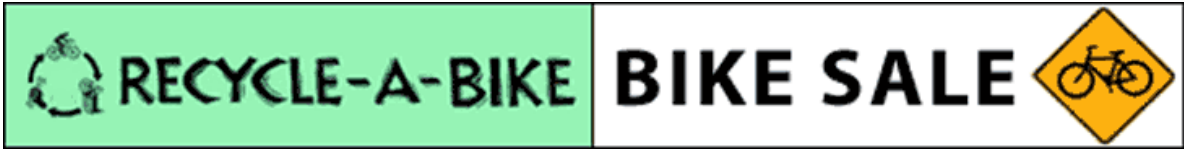
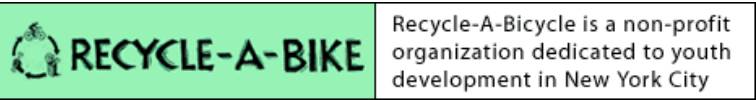
caught again someday when it is bigger.

***Congratulations!***



***You are now ready to go fishing!!!***





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**The ABC's of Fishing**

**A**ttraction - Be sure that the bait you're using is "attracting" to the fish you're after.

**B**aiting - when baiting a hook, bait it correctly! An incorrectly rigged lure or bait could cause the loss of a trophy fish!

**C**ast - Learn to cast properly! The more accurate and controlled your cast is, the higher your odds to cast in a big fish zone.

**D**isturb - Fish may not always be attracted to just a lure, you might have to give it some life, jerk it around and try new techniques!

**E**quipment - When buying equipment don't just buy the cheapest rod, pick a quality rod and make sure it is right for the type of fishing you are planning to do.

**F**ind - Before you catch any fish you have to know where they are, experiment a little bit and stick with one place don't keep switching.

**G**ive - The fish has to have time to take the bait! If you pull or tug too soon the fish may loose interest in "the meal"

*(remember fish go after the smaller weaker fish. If they know that what they are trying to catch is too strong the will immediately give up)*

**H**

**Home** - Fish where the fish are! You must know where the fish are located, or where there "home" is. Fishing where there are no fish can be very time consuming and boring.

**I**

**Identify** - Learn to identify all the types of fish!

**J**

**Judgment** - When you cast, have good judgment. If you cast and the lure doesn't end up exactly where you planned it, reel it in and try it again.

**K**

**Knots** - An improperly tied knot is one of the worst things a fisherman could do, it causes the loss of a fish and a lure. So learn to tie good knots.

**L**

**License** - Never fish without a license! If you are caught without a license you can suffer major fines.

*(Licenses do not apply to people who are under 16)*

**M**

**Map** - Try and get a contour map of the lake you are fishing at, a contour map shows structure and structure shows the fishes "home"

**N**

**Noise** - Keep the noise at a minimum. If you scare all the fish away you won't catch any!

*The most common thing that scares fish away is when people drop anchor*

**O**

**Observe** - Be sure that when you find a good fishing spot you observe where you are! You will probably want to go back to that spot the next time you visit that lake.

**P**

resentation - Be sure that whatever you are using to catch fish looks good to the fish. A lure that has weeds and gunk on it will not attract fish!

**Q**

uarry - Know what fish you are after, Make a decision of what fish you are after and choose the right lures and location for that type of fish.

**R**

ig - Make sure your rigging is correct! A bad rigging can cause the same problem as a bad knot.  
*(the loss of a fish and a lure)*

**S**

tructure - Figure out where the structure is, most fish live in the structure of the lake or pond, you must find it to catch the fish.

**T**

emperature - know how warm or cool the water is and what type of fish like that temperature, then you will know what fish you should aim for that day.

**U**

tilize - Utilize new and proven methods. Don't be scared to try things, *they may lead to a trophy fish!*

**V**

ariety - have a variety of lures in your tackle box. If you lose your favorite one or just run out of stuff, you should always have backups and extras.

**W**

eather - always watch the weather and know what the weather will be like.

**X**

marks the spot - Mark an X on your map where you catch your fish, then you will know where to return to the next time you come.

**Y**

ield - Know that fishing is always changing and yielding different results on different lures, techniques, and methods, so watch for the newest ones and try them yourself

**Z**one - know where the fish are! Fish live in a particular zone; you must find that zone to catch the fish.





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## Care of your spin cast fishing reel

Usually the water that sprays on your spin cast fishing reel while retrieving is not pure. Besides water residue and dust particles there are grease and oils from your hands that adhere to the reel. All these impurities should be eliminated by cleaning your spin cast reel.

To keep the outer parts of your reel clean try using a knuckle brush with clean tap water. An old tooth brush will reach the back side of the handle and knobs and a Q-Tip will clean the hard to reach places.

Before removing any of the parts of the reel select a flat working surface like the kitchen table where there is plenty of overhead light. Some people use a small tray for parts, others use an egg carton and some people use a clean white towel.

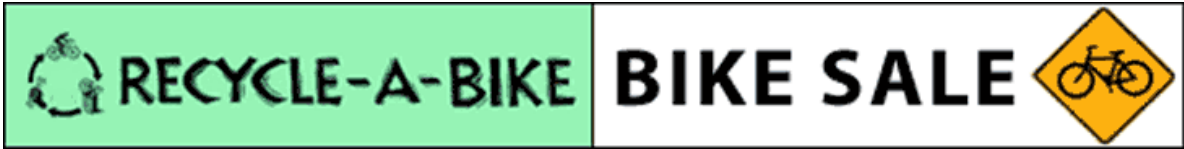
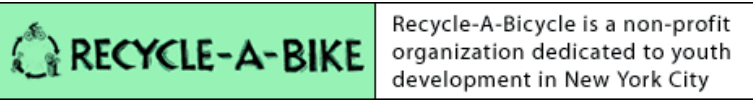
To clean a spinning reel you must remove the handle That happens when you turn the handle counter clock wise. Next take the screws from the protective plate. You can remove these screws with a small screw driver. Once you removed the plate you can inspect and clean the gears. At least once a year you should remove the old grease and oil and add new lubricants.

When adding oil and grease use a Q-Tip for grease. Make sure cover all the teeth on the gears with grease. Use a grease according to manufacturers' instructions and recommendations. Oil the outer parts of the reel like the handle, bail and anti-reverse lever.










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# Equipment Tips

## Learn to use your equipment properly and efficiently!

- [\[DRAG SETTINGS\]](#)
- [\[SETTING CAST CONTROLS ON CASTING REELS\]](#)
- [\[CASTING A CONVENTIONAL REEL WITH NO CAST CONTROLS\]](#)
- [\[AVOID TANGLES ON YOUR SPINNING REEL\]](#)
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- [\[SUNGLASSES\]](#)

### DRAG SETTINGS:

The biggest mistake made by anglers is to have their drag set improperly. Most manufacturers recommend that your drag be set at one-third of your line's test weight. This means that a reel holding 15 pound test line should have the drag set to let out line at 5 pounds of pull.

To set your drag, run the line out through your rod's guides, tie a loop in the end, then use the hook on a fish scale (*the tool, not the fish body part*) to pull on the line. When the weight shown on the scale is one-third of your rated line weight, the drag should be letting out line.

If not, adjust the drag until it does.

### SETTING CAST CONTROLS ON CASTING REELS:

There are 2 primary methods for adjusting the cast controls on casting reels. Try them both and stick with the method that works best for you and your reel.

First method is to adjust the control so that it just barely stops the reel from falling when you push the casting button. To do this, loosen the cast control a little and push the button. The lure should start falling. Quickly adjust the cast control until the lure stops falling. Remember to make small adjustments.

The second method is to set the control so that there is no overrun when the lure strikes the deck. To do this, push the casting button and let the lure fall to the deck. If the spool keeps turning and lets the line overrun, adjust the cast control and try again. Make small adjustments until the spool stops the instant the lure hits the deck.

With either method, you will need to re-adjust the cast control when you change lures, especially if the lure is a different weight.

### CASTING A CONVENTIONAL REEL WITH NO CAST CONTROLS:

Some people are afraid to try using a conventional casting reel with no cast controls because they fear that they will end up with bad line tangles. However, anyone can learn to cast a conventional reel with a little practice. Conventional reels are typically very rugged, simply made and have a lot of line capacity, so anglers targeting large, strong fish often use them.

To cast a conventional reel, push the casting button or lever drag, place your thumb against the line on the spool, swing the rod from behind you to about a 45-degree angle in front, let go with your thumb for a split second, immediately touch the thumb gently against the spool to keep the line from overrunning and tangling, and apply more pressure as the lure touches the water. The extensive use of the thumb has led many instructors to describe experienced conventional reel anglers as having an "educated thumb." Anglers who take the time to practice and educate their thumbs will broaden their skills and may find that they enjoy the strength, simplicity and line capacity of a conventional reel.

### AVOID TANGLES ON YOUR SPINNING REEL:



Spinning reels often get bird's nests and tangles, which are usually caused by one of few mistakes.

1. The line is twisted (*nothing a swivel tied to the end of your line can't fix*)
2. The line is not tight against the spool
3. Putting the line on the reel improperly. The line should go onto the reel the same way it comes off the spool, taking advantage of the curve the line has memorized from being stored on the spool. Lay the spool **FLAT** on the ground (**do NOT hold it vertically**) and start winding the reel. If tangles begin, turn the spool over. The tangling should stop and your reel should be tangle free for the future, as long as you don't make the other two mistakes.
4. Mistakenly overfilling the spool. Spinning reels should never be filled past the front spool lip, or too much line will come out during casting and -POOF!- you'll have a big mess of tangles.
5. The most common mistake is to crank the reel while a fish is taking out line. While it's OK to crank a baitcaster while a fish makes a run, a spinning reel is not designed for such a mistake. During the fish's run, cranking a spinning reel literally twirls the line around and around, twisting it up like a rubber band and resulting in lots of kinks and tangles.

#### Here are the steps to tighten the line onto the spool:

Go to a large field such as a school

Tie the end of your line to something stationary such as a light pole or small tree etc.

Open the bail and walk away. The line will come off the spool as you walk. Be sure to walk off all the line.

Once all the line is off the spool start cranking the line back on while keeping tension on the line. Make sure the rod has a small bend as you crank in the line.

### FILLING CASTING AND CONVENTIONAL REELS:

Improper filling of casting and conventional reels can lead to tangles, just like on a spinning reel. Again, it is important to put the line on the reel the same way it comes off the spool. **This time, the spool of line should be vertical**, with the hole horizontal and perhaps with a pencil through it. The line should be coming off the top of the spool, **NOT the bottom**. Fill the spool to the fill line, which is a painted or etched line on the spool, and you're done.

### **POLARIZED SUNGLASSES:**



All anglers will surpass protection to their eyes and be able to see fish underwater extremely well with good quality polarized sunglasses. Polarization cuts surface glare due to the alignment of particles in or on the lens, which can actually help an angler see underwater. Since polarization makes sunglasses special, glasses that are polarized usually bear a special label when they're on the rack. However, not all polarized sunglasses are created equal. The better polarized sunglasses have a ground-in polarization that results in a top-notch, optical quality lens with no distortions. Cheaper polarized sunglasses only have a sprayed-on polarized finish that results in lens distortions that will cause eyestrain and can even damage the eyes. Like polarization, optical quality lenses are special, so if they're optical quality there will usually be a special label or information in the accompanying tag or pamphlet that says so.





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Let's think like a fish!

Have you ever noticed that when you are on the bank, the best place to fish is out in the middle?

Then when you are in a boat the best place to fish is at the edge.

When we set out to match wits with a fish we are not starting out on a good foot.

Let's look at it from the other side for a moment as if we are being humaned for by a fish and see what would work.

You are sitting on your sofa watching TV when something the size of a hickory stump slams into the roof of your house. **SLAM!**

Now there is a big hole in the ceiling with a big rope hanging through with a big weight and hook on it. On the hook is a big ugly plastic Big Mac.

What is the first thing that you do?

It might be your living room but you are not going back for a while.

Now let's say you are walking across a parking lot and you see a twenty dollar bill.

After you pick it up you see another and then another.

It will not be long before you are running around excited and help is starting to come from everywhere.

Soon the National Guard is called in to control the crowd.

Then with little notice one of us is hooked and quickly pulled away.

Then another and yet another.

Soon we will catch on and run away. Now the fish has a stringer full of humans and is ready to go home.

I hope that they don't ever get that smart and I hope we get just a little bit smarter than we are.

The point is that if you will think like a fish then you stand a better chance of catching one.

If you can get your bait to the fish without the fish knowing it  
you will catch fish.





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# Flyfishing

## Equipment

It is very important that you choose equipment that is well balanced and suited to the particular fishing situation.

While a particular flyrod may be used in different fishing situations, its range of applications is far narrower than that of a spinning rod.

You can take a 6 1/2 foot medium action **spinning rod** spooled with 8 lb. test and catch just about anything. You could throw a small trout spinner or a large bass plug. It may not be perfect, but it will work just fine.

With **flyfishing** equipment, you have to choose the gear with a certain type of fishing in mind. Again, there is some freedom in the equipment's range of applications, but it is not as flexible.

For instance a flyrod used for trout couldn't throw one of the large bass bugs more than a few feet, and that's if it didn't snap in half first. Likewise, a flyrod used for bass could throw any trout fly, but the presentation would be very far from delicate.

When referring to equipment as being well balanced, we am not referring to the center of gravity, but the ability for all of the components to compliment each other and work as one.

There are six main components that compose a flyfishing outfit:

fly  
flyline  
leader  
**rod**  
backing  
**reel**

Listed are the components in the order in which you should choose them. Your fly determines the flyline; the flyline determines the leader, and so forth. This does not mean that there is only one particular match for a certain fly size and type. You must also consider the species of fish, type of water, will you be wading or fishing from shore, etc.

## Flies

Now it's time to choose what sizes and types of flies you will be using.

There are two main categories of flies:

- flies that rest on the water (surface),
- flies that go below the surface (sub-surface)

The most common types of above surface flies are dry flies and poppers.

Dry flies are imitations of the adult stage of small insects, and usually suspend themselves in the surface film with the use of a feather collar or hackle. These flies are practically weightless, and are not too wind resistant.



Poppers can imitate anything from a frog to an injured baitfish, and are usually made of balsa, cork, foam, or spun deer hair.



These flies have much more weight and wind resistance to them; therefore they require much stronger tackle to cast them efficiently.

There are three main types of sub-surface flies: nymphs, wet flies, and streamers.

Nymphs and wet flies are very similar; they both represent insects in their aquatic life stage.



This stage comes before the adult stage (dry fly). While nymphs and wet flies may imitate slightly different things, the main difference is wet flies have wings and nymphs do not. These flies weigh a little more than a dry fly, and weight is often added to them in order for them to achieve the proper depth. This additional weight makes them a little harder to cast, but the good news is that there is almost no wind resistance.

The final group is the streamer.



A streamer is usually tied to imitate a baitfish. They are tied on longer hooks and have long sloping wings to form the body of the fish. They are usually a little heavier than the nymphs, and the wind resistance can vary depending on the particular fly.

## Flyline

Flylines are classified by weight, taper, and density (*if they float or sink*).

Flylines are categorized by weight into a number system, which runs from number 1, which is the lightest, to number 15, which is the heaviest. The lighter lines are more delicate in their presentation and they cast small flies well. The heavier lines are less delicate in presentation, but provide the power to cast large, wind-resistant, and heavy flies. Flylines in the 4 to 10 range are the most common.

Most trout fishing situations call for a line between 4 and 6. For bass, line weights between 7 and 9 should be ideal. Panfish rods fall between the trout and bass rod.



For saltwater anglers, you will probably want to be in the 8 to 10 range.

This chart may clarify things a little bit for you, but please keep in mind this chart is just a generalization. It is to be used only as a rough guide.

Line Weight Summary				
	Trout	Panfish	Bass	Saltwater
Line Weight	Hook Sizes			
1-4	14-28			
5	12-24	12-24		
6	8-22	8-22		
7	6-18	4-14	4-14	
8			1/0-10	1/0-10
9			3/0-6	3/0-6
10-15				5/0-2

The density of flylines also differs. There are floating lines which are meant to always stay on top of the water's surface.

There are sinking lines which are meant to stay below the surface.

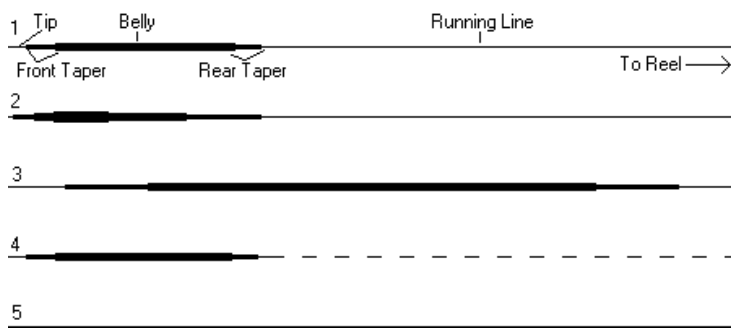
And there are lines that fall in between the two different categories.

Let's make this real easy for you right now; your first one should be a floating line.

They are the most common, the most versatile, and the easiest to learn with.

The tapers also differ to suit different conditions. There are five main types of flyline tapers which are illustrated below in the following order:

- 1-weight forward,
- 2-bass bug/saltwater taper
- 3-double taper
- 4-shooting taper
- 5-level.



A flyline is usually around 90 feet in length. On a weight forward line; there is 60 feet of thin diameter running line, and a thirty foot section known as the head. The head consists of the front taper, belly, and rear taper. The combination of different tapers and different diameters of belly can greatly affect the line's casting characteristics. A weight forward line has a moderate front and rear taper, whereas a bass bug/saltwater line have a much more severe taper. The more severe taper transfers more energy into the tip of the line, which enables it to turn over the heavier and more wind resistant flies associated with this type of fishing. The double taper line has a more subtle taper to allow for a very delicate presentation. This line does not have the weight concentrated in the head like the previous two types. Instead, the weight is spread along the whole length of line. Consequently, it does not cast as far as a weight forward line. There are some advantages though, the biggest being that the line is identical on both ends. This allows you to simply flip the line around when you wear out one end. In essence, this doubles the lines useful life. A shooting taper is simply the front 30 feet of a weight forward line. This allows the angler to add their own running line, which is usually monofilament. The extremely thin running line allows for extremely long distance casting. These lines are difficult to use, and should not be considered until you are a very proficient caster. The final type is a level line. This line is the same diameter from beginning to end. The only reason this line still exists is because of its low cost. It is very inexpensive to manufacture, and therefore to purchase. It casts poorly, and should not be considered at all. Many beginner combos come with this type of line, and I feel this is the worst thing a manufacturer can do. Do yourself a favor and stay away. If you buy a combo that has this line, then plan on purchasing an additional line. You will learn much faster if you use a weight forward line. When purchasing a flyline, you will need to know how to read the flyline abbreviations printed on the box. There is an abbreviation that lists the taper, the weight, and the density. The tapers are abbreviated as

follows: weight forward-WF, bass bug/saltwater-BBT or SWT, double taper-DT, shooting taper-ST, and level-L. The weight is simply the line weight 1-15, and the density is abbreviated as: floating-f, sinking-s, sink tip-st or f/s. Therefore, a weight forward line that is a 5 weight and floats would be WF5F. Manufacturer's abbreviations may vary a little, but generally they are easy to figure out.

## Leaders

Now let's discuss leaders.

A leader is attached between the fly and the flyline. It is made of monofilament, and is tapered from front to back. The wide end is known as the butt, and this is what gets attached to the flyline.

The middle of the leader is called the mid-section. The narrow end is known as the tippet, and this is what attaches to the fly.

The leader keeps the large flyline away from the fish, and it also softens the flies approach to the water. Leaders are classified by an X system, which designates the tippet diameter for that particular leader. Every leader's X-Rating is the same. Brand A's 3X and Brand B's 3X are both .008"; however the pound test does vary among manufacturers. It must be pointed out that there are leaders larger in diameter than the 0X listed. After 0X the leaders are then classified by there pound rating.

Here is a chart of the different X-Ratings and their corresponding properties.

Rating	Diameter	Approximate pound test	Recommended fly sizes
0X	.011"	12	1/0-4
1X	.010"	10	2-8
2X	.009"	8	6-12
3X	.008"	6	8-14
4X	.007"	5	12-16
5X	.006"	4	14-20
6X	.005"	3	16-24
7X	.004"	2	18-28
8X	.003"	1	18-28

## Flyrods

Now for the Rod.

Flyrods come in all lengths, weights, and materials. Older rods were made of bamboo, and these are expensive collector's items today. Some rods are made of fiberglass, and these are usually of poor quality. They may say graphite on them, but the percentage used is minimal. You can spot one of these rods right away. If you look at the diameter of the blank right above the grip, it is very large compared to the same weight rod in a more expensive true graphite model. The most common material is graphite and this is the only one you should concern yourself with for now. It is much lighter than fiberglass, and also casts much better. More or less, you get what you pay for when it comes to flyrods. If you see a flyrod for thirty dollars, and it says graphite, you can bet it's really fiberglass. You don't have to spend a fortune either. True graphite rods start around fifty dollars and this should be your minimum. The weight of a flyrod is the manufacturer's suggestion as to which weight line it will cast the best.

Therefore, a 5 weight rod should use a 5 weight line. Rods usually have a marking on the [blank](#), just above the grip. It will tell you the length, weight, and sometimes the physical weight of the rod, the number of pieces it comes in, and the material it is made out of. It should look something like this: 8'6" 5, or 865. Both of these designate an eight and a half foot rod which should cast a five weight line. It may also look like this G906, which is a nine foot rod for six weight line, and the G stands for graphite. There are many different actions or bending properties for flyrods, but you don't have to worry yourself with that for now.

The other consideration is length. A long rod generates more line speed, and its length helps to keep your line from hitting the water or ground on your backcast. A shorter rod is better suited to tight fishing conditions. Say you are fishing a narrow stream lined with bushes and trees. The shorter rod will be much easier to handle, and in a situation like that you will not have to make too many long casts anyway.

## Backing

Backing attaches between the flyline and the reel. It simply adds length to your 90 feet of line without adding bulk and excessive cost.

It is simply there to allow a fish to make a long run while playing him.

If you were to make a sixty foot cast to a northern pike, you

would definitely need more than thirty feet of extra line to play the fish. It is made out of braided Dacron and is similar in diameter to regular monofilament. It usually comes in 20 or 30 pound test. Twenty pound is most common for freshwater, and thirty pound is most common for saltwater.

The amount of backing you choose depends upon the fighting characteristics of the fish. For a fish that does not make long runs, 50 yards should be fine. 100 yards is the most common amount of backing used. For fish that are known to make very long runs, you may choose to have 200 yards or more.

One other reason to use backing on your reel is to increase the diameter of the spool where the flyline is wound. This helps prevent tangles, which can be caused by the line being wound into very small circles. The increased diameter also helps you retrieve more line with every revolution of the reel.

## Reels

There are only a few different types of reels.

The most common being the single action, which is pictured below.



With this type of reel, the handle is attached directly to the spool. There are no gears to change the ratio. These reels usually have a spring and pawl, or a disc drag. The spring and pawl is a simple and inexpensive drag, and is satisfactory for most smaller species such as trout and panfish. The disc drag is smoother and more precise. This is the preferred drag system for bass and saltwater anglers, where you must control a very powerful fish.

Many reels have what is called an exposed rim. This is a very important feature to have. It allows the angler to apply drag directly to the spinning spool with the palm of their hand. You should insist on this feature when purchasing a reel.

There are also reels that have gears to multiply your input, and there are reels that incorporate an anti-reverse handle.

These are nice things to have in certain situations, but they are specialized in their application range.

The last type of reel is an automatic reel. This reel has a large spring inside to allow you to retrieve all of your line with just a push of a button.

These reels are not very common. They are heavy and do not store enough line.

Your first reel should be a single action.

When shopping for a reel, you will want to see what the capacity for the particular reel is. For example, reel X might hold a weight forward 5 weight line and 120 yards of backing, or a weight forward 6 weight and 80 yards of backing.

Therefore, you should choose a reel that holds the line and amount of backing you chose earlier.

## Conclusion

Remember that flyrods are specialized, and one outfit can not do it all. Therefore, you should choose an outfit that lies on the middle ground for the species you plan to pursue.

You can purchase the specialized outfits later.

A good choice rod for trout and maybe some panfish, would be an 8'6" five weight, with a WF5F line, 9 foot leaders between 4X and 6X, and between 50 and 100 yards of backing.

For bass, a 9'0" 8 weight rod with a WF8F bass bug taper line, 0X or 1X leaders of 7.5 feet, and between 50 and 100 yards of backing.

Saltwater rods can vary greatly, but it should be at least 9 feet and at least and 8 weight for general applications.

Don't be intimidated by all of these variables.

Your local fly shop will be glad to help you set up a well balanced outfit. You should know what the basic variables are so you can convey what you want the outfit to do, and you can understand what the salesperson is telling you.

A decent outfit should cost you between \$100 and \$150.

If you can afford to spend more than this, by all means do so. Remember, you get what you pay for and a quality outfit is something you will get years of use and enjoyment out of.





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# Flyfishing

## Assembly

Proper assembly of your equipment is vital to its performance.

In this section, you will be walked through the proper steps to assemble and disassemble your tackle.

There are many knots used in flyfishing, and there can be many different knots that will work for one particular connection point in your tackle.

At each connection point, we'll mention the most common knots used for that particular connection. One knot recommend will be the hyperlink with tying instructions and illustrations. You can jump back and forth if you are assembling your rod as you read this, or you may wait and learn all of the knots at once in the [Knots section](#) of this site.

The first step is to decide which hand you would like to use for reeling. Most reels are capable of both a right-hand or left-hand retrieve. The 'Classic' method seems to lean towards reeling with your right hand; however there are many people who prefer reeling with their left hand. This is really just personal preference, and either method is acceptable. You may find it more comfortable to reel with your left hand if you are right-handed and have been fishing with a spinning reel for many years.

Some reels have the same amount of drag in both directions, but most have more drag in one direction than the other. If your reel has more drag in one direction, you will have to make sure it is set up properly for your chosen right-hand or



left-hand retrieve. Take the reel in your hand and look straight at the side with the reel handle. For a right-hand retrieve, it should be easier to turn it clockwise and harder to turn it counter-clockwise. For a left-hand retrieve, it should be harder to turn it clockwise, and easier to turn it counter-clockwise. If your reel is set up for the other hand, you will have to reverse your drag setting. You should refer to your owner's manual for the proper procedure.

Most of the time, you just have to remove the spool and reverse the position of the two pieces that apply pressure to the drag spring.

Now we can attach the reel to the rod. Since we are going to be loading line on the reel, it is best to just use the lower section of the rod so it is short enough to handle easily.

Simply insert the foot of the reel into the reel seat, and tighten the reel seat until it is snug. When you hold the rod in your casting hand with the reel hanging below the rod, the reel handle should be on the same side of the rod as the hand you intend to reel with.

The next step is to determine the proper amount of backing to use. Your owner's manual for your reel should tell you the amount of backing to use, with a certain weight line, to fill it to the proper level. It may state the capacity is 100 yards of 20 pound backing with a weight forward 5 line, or 75 yards of 20 pound backing with a weight forward 6 line. What you are trying to do is put enough backing on the reel so the line, which is a fixed length, properly fills the rest of the space. You want the line to be about 1/8" short of the spool's edge. This leaves enough room so you don't pinch the line between the spool and the body of the reel.

There is an alternative method if your reel did not come with a capacity chart.

You can wind your flyline onto the spool first, and then wind on enough backing to fill to the proper capacity. Then cut the backing at this point, and remove the backing and flyline. You have now predetermined the proper amount of backing. If you use this method, be sure not to mix up the ends of the flyline. One end gets attached to the backing and one end gets attached to the leader. Unless your line is level or a double taper, the two ends are very different.

Take the backing and insert it through the guides on the lower section of the rod. Bring the backing down to the reel and tie an [Arbor Knot](#) to properly secure it. Now wind the backing onto the reel, and make sure that the line is coming out of the guide and onto the side of the reel that is away from the rod. Wind the backing as smooth and even as possible, by guiding it with your other hand. Leave a few feet of backing hanging out of the guides, so you have enough room to tie your next knot.

The next connection is from your backing to the 'reel' side of the flyline.

You can either use a [Nail Knot](#) or an [Albright Knot](#). Take your time with this one and try to make the connection as smooth as possible.

A fish may take enough line out that takes you into your backing. If this knot is bulky and/or sloppy, it may get stuck in the guides and could cause the leader to break when the fish surges.

Now wind your flyline onto the reel, and try to keep the line fairly smooth by guiding it with your other hand.

It doesn't have to be perfect.

You just want to make sure that you have properly calculated the amount of backing.

If you did....great!

If you didn't, you will need to remove the flyline from the reel, adjust the backing accordingly, and re-tie your connection.

Now it's time to attach the [leader](#) to the flyline. You have quite a few choices here, and all are acceptable.

The first choice is to attach the leader to the flyline using a [Nail Knot](#) or a [Needle Knot](#).

These produce solid connections; however you will not be able to replace your leader without having to tie a new knot. This doesn't pose a problem if you are able to tie these knots without too much fuss.

If you would like an easier method, you can utilize a loop to loop connection. You will need to have a loop at the end of the flyline and the butt section of the leader. You can use a braided loop connector to create a loop at the end of the

flyline. It is simply a hollow braided tube with a loop at the end. You slide the tip of your flyline into the connector, and then affix a small section of heat shrink tubing over the connector to keep the line from sliding out. These are very handy and work well. You can find them at most fly shops. If you use the braided loop connector, be sure to periodically check the connector for signs of wear.

They are somewhat fragile and can break at the most inopportune time.

Another way to add a loop to the end of your line is to make your own loop out of heavy monofilament line.

You can use a piece of heavy tippet material or standard monofilament fishing line. Just make sure the material you use is approximately the same diameter and stiffness as the butt section of the leaders you plan to use. This is usually around twenty to thirty pound test for most applications. Just don't go too light or you will create a hinge at the connection, and your leader will not turn over properly.

Tie one end to your line with either the [Nail Knot](#) or [Needle Knot](#).

Now you have to create a loop with the monofilament, and this is best accomplished using the [Perfection Knot](#). You will also use the Perfection Knot to create a loop in the butt, or heavy, end of your leader. You can now utilize the loop to loop connection to quickly and easily change your leaders if necessary.

If you like, you may now add additional tippet material to the end of your leader. This is not really necessary on a brand new leader, but it does provide you with a few advantages. There are many different approaches to this, and it is really an ongoing debate among anglers.

Here is a common method among anglers.

If you decide that a 5X leader is appropriate for your particular fishing situation, you can purchase a 4X leader and simply add about twelve to eighteen inches of 5X tippet to the end of it.

In other words, buy a leader one X-rating stiffer than you plan to use. You could even add 6X tippet to make the leader even more delicate. With this configuration you will prolong the life of the original leader, and will be able to change between two or three different X-ratings quickly and easily.

Another advantage of this system is that the knot used to attach the extra tippet material also serves the purpose of

holding your split shot at the proper distance from the fly when you are fishing nymphs. If you crimp split-shot onto a leader without such a knot, your split-shot will eventually move closer and closer to the fly. Since most nymphing is done with the use of split-shot, this can be very helpful. If you decide not to use this method, you will need to add tippet material after tying on a few flies. The rule of thumb is to add tippet material when the leader is 80% of its original length. A 7.5 foot leader has about 1.5 feet of tippet when it's new, and a 9 foot leader has about 2 feet of tippet when it's new. If you choose this route, I'd suggest you add tippet before your leader gets this short. By doing so, you will be able to replace the tippet section many times without losing the tapered section of the leader.

In either case, you can use either a

[Triple Surgeons Knot](#)

or a

[Blood Knot](#)

to make this connection.

Finally, assemble your rod's sections, and thread the leader up through the guides.

You can attach your fly using an [Improved Clinch Knot](#), [Palomar Knot](#), or [Turtle Knot](#).

That's it!

You're ready to go fishing.

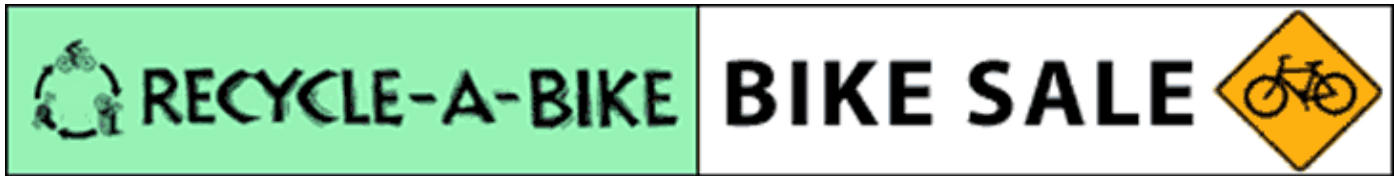
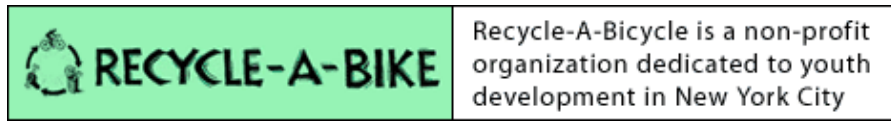
One last note is to use caution when disassembling your rod's sections.

You should try to pull them apart in a straight line, and not apply excessive pressure to the ferrule area.

A rod can be easily damaged if you are not careful.







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## Casting

Here is the basic outline of the cast and also helpful tips to keep in mind.

To completely learn how to cast, you are much better off learning from an instructor or from a good book.

Illustrations of both the forward and back cast are provided. These illustrations have large numbers around their edges that represent the numbers on the face of a clock. When you are practicing, you can think of the clock positions to help determine the proper rod positions.

There are two main parts to a cast, the **back cast** and the **forward cast**.

### The Backcast

The backcast can be broken down into three sections.

The first step is to begin moving the rod slowly upward in order to apply tension to the line.

The second step is to accelerate the line and

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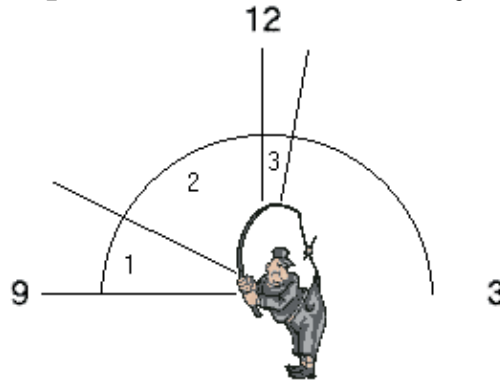
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then abruptly stop.

The third step is to allow the rod to drift back slowly a little bit to prepare for the forward cast.

It is very important that you abruptly stop the rod at the 12 o'clock position. When you watch an experienced caster, you may not actually see the stop, but it's definitely there.



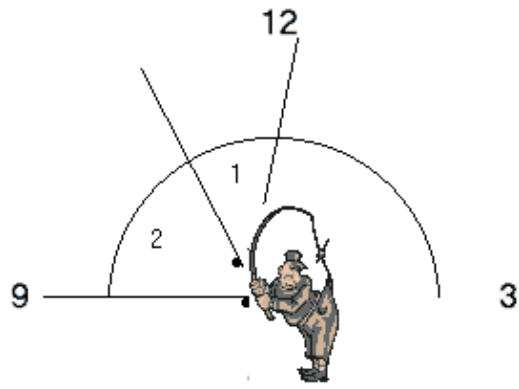
## The Forward Cast

The forward cast can be broken down into two sections.

The first step is to accelerate the rod to an abrupt stop.

The second step is to follow through to a finish.

Again, the abrupt stop at around 11 o'clock is very important. The forward cast power stroke is very similar to a 'karate chop' or the cracking of a whip. The follow through just helps absorb some of the power to allow the line to land quietly.





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## What Are **Panfish**

Panfish is a general term that includes a number of fish species that normally don't grow larger than a frying pan.

Panfish run in large schools in shallow water near the shore in spring and fall.

Technically, it includes fish like crappies, but black and white crappies attract such a following year-round that they command their own category of discussion among fishing circles. Instead, panfishing is usually understood to include small fish in the sunfish family—bluegills, redears, green sunfish, pumpkinseeds and related species. These are aggressive feeders, common in most waters, and easy to catch during April and May.

They can be found near lily pads, bull rushes, cattails, grass flats and debris man made structures such as boat docks and lifts. During the summer panfish will be found in water 10' to 20' feet deep. Even at these depths, they will be found around structure and drop offs. Bluegills, Pumpkinseeds and Longears prefer lakes and ponds but may occur in streams. Rock Bass are found in cool lakes and rocky streams. Warmouths like sluggish creeks while Spotted Sunfish and Redears like warm cypress lakes. Redbreasts prefer clear streams. Crappies prefer clear water although White Crappies will tolerate some silt with spring and fall being best.

In keeping with the name of this group of fish, many anglers stock their freezers with tasty panfish taken during the spring spawning season.

Fortunately, sunfish can thrive in almost any kind of water except for cold lakes and streams. They are abundant in farm ponds, natural lakes, slow-flowing creeks, large reservoirs and even drainage ditches having permanent water. Due to their popularity, sunfish are often stocked in urban fisheries. Because of this, they are readily accessible throughout most of the United States. Nearly anyone can experience the spring panfish bonanza close to home.

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*Bluegills are the best known and probably the most sought-after panfish species, given their relatively large size and nationwide abundance. Their life history is typical for sunfish species, so knowing how to catch them is useful when fishing for any of the sunfish group.*

Fortunately, panfish spawn in shallow water that's easily accessed from the shoreline. Boats or float tubes can sometimes be helpful but usually are not essential. Small sunfish may nest in water only a foot deep, but the trophy fish tend to nest 4 to 6 feet deep on sandy or rocky bottoms. Since it takes longer for deep water to warm to preferred spawning temperature, big fish tend to spawn later than their smaller relatives.

Water clarity and depth also affect timing of the spawn. Murky water absorbs heat and warms faster than clear water. Shallow impoundments warm faster than deep, bowl-like fisheries. Knowing these things helps panfish anglers extend their success by moving to different locations at appropriate times.

Generally, daily panfish limits are either absent or very liberal, due to prolific reproduction. In certain fisheries with heavy angling pressure, though, size limits may be imposed to help fish reach trophy proportions. This is especially true in stocked, urban fishing areas. Be sure to check regulations before fishing.

**Whether you're a novice or a veteran,  
a day of panfishing gets the angling year off to  
a great start!**

## **Baits & Presentation**

A wide variety of natural baits are effective with panfish such as insects, worms, grubs, maggots, leeches and small minnows. Usually presented with a small, short shanked hook on a monofilament line with a split shot and float of some sort (bobber, bubble, slip floats). Suspend the bait at half the depth of the water and adjust up or down as feeding activity indicates. No more than one minute of inactivity in one spot. If they are there, they will bite. Move it around until you get

some action.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** panfish run in schools by size. I have seen one spot produce 4" fish repeatedly and as little as 2 feet to one side or the other, you will pull out one 7 incher after another. Fly fishing with wet flies, dry flies & small popping bugs are very effective. Crappies are best on small live minnows while still fishing or slow trolling. Fly-fishing and spin casting with streamers, spoons, spinners or jigs are also good methods.

## Equipment

The most exciting ways of taking Panfish are ultra light action spinning and fly rods with 10-15' cane poles being most popular in some parts of the country. 2# to 4# test monofilament line is more than adequate for these relatively small fish. Throw in some bobbers, small, short shanked hooks and some split shot and you are ready to go. Common fish sizes are ¼-1 pound with some reaching as large as 3 pounds.

**Here is a list of those that are considered to be panfish:**

*Click on one below and learn all about them including the best ways to catch them!*



[WARMOUTH](#)

[BLUEGILL](#)

[REDEAR SUNFISH](#)

[REDBREAST SUNFISH](#)

[SPOTTED SUNFISH](#)

[BLACK CRAPPIE](#)

[FLIER](#)

[PUMPKINSEED](#)

**[Click here for a list of other fish to catch!](#)**



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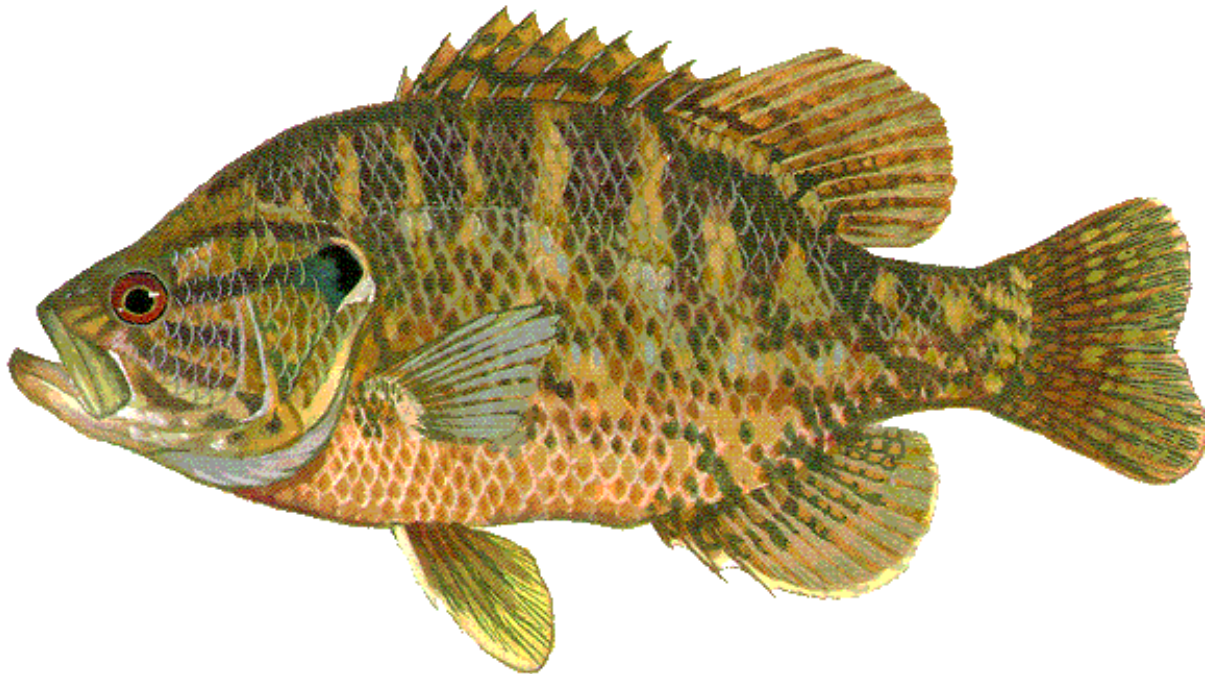
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## Warmouth

(*Chaenobryttus gulosus*)



**Common Names** - warmouth bass, warmouth perch, goggle-eye, redeye and goggle-eyed perch.

**Description** - The warmouth closely resembles a bass or a bream. It has a stout, deep body similar to that of a bluegill or redear sunfish, yet has a large bass-like mouth. The red eye and large mouth are the first conspicuous field marks of mature warmouth. They vary from brassy to dark-olive green and often have a purple tint overall. Broad, irregular dark bars give it a mottled appearance. The soft-rayed portions of the dorsal and anal fins are marked with rows of dark spots. Three or four conspicuous dark stripes radiate back from the eye across to the cheek and gill cover.

**Habitat** - Warmouths inhabit swamps, marshes, shallow lakes, slow-moving streams and canals with soft, muddy bottoms. They prefer to stay around aquatic vegetation, stumps, and snags and under the banks of streams and ponds. They have more tolerance for muddy water than most species.

**Spawning Habits** - Warmouths are solitary nesters that prefer to build their nest adjacent to some submerged object. Nests are found over a wide range of water depths. They often spawn more than once a year usually between April and August. Females may produce 3,000 to 23,000 eggs.

**Feeding Habits** - Warmouths are carnivorous. Crayfish, shrimp, insects and small fishes make up the bulk of its diet. Most of its feeding is done in the morning, as it seems to sleep at night.

**Sporting Qualities** - The warmouth is one of the more easily caught sunfish by anglers using cane poles and natural baits, spinning tackle with small topwater lures and shallow-running spinners. They strike hard, frequently breaking the surface of the water. The best place to catch warmouths is shallow water around trees, stumps, or vegetation.

**Eating Quality** - The warmouth are good to eat when caught from clean water. Like other panfish they are relatively small and bony. The flesh is usually prepared by deep-frying after rolling it in seasoned cornmeal.



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# Bluegill

(*Lepomis macrochirus*)



[\[Common Names\]](#)
[\[Description\]](#)
[\[Habitat\]](#)
[\[Spawning Habits\]](#)
[\[Feeding Habits\]](#)
[\[Sporting Qualities\]](#)
[\[Eating Quality\]](#)  
[\[ Fishing for Bluegill\]](#)

## Common Names

bream, blue bream, sun perch, blue sunfish, copperhead, copperbelly, roach.

## Description

Bluegills have small mouths and oval-shaped, almost rounded, bodies. Body coloration is highly variable with size, sex, spawning, water color, bottom type, and amount of cover. In general, they are somewhat lavender and bronze with about six dark bars on their sides. Males tend to have a copper-colored bar over the top of the head behind the eyes. The breast is silver to slightly blue most of the year, with some yellow or orange during spawning season. Females are generally lighter colored than males. Two distinctive characteristics are the prominent black spot on the rear edge of the gill-cover and a black spot at the base of the posterior portion of the dorsal fin.

The Bluegill and other species of the sunfish family make up some of the most common and fished for fish in the US. Although relatively small (usually less than ten inches, rarely over a pound) bluegills and other sunfish are easy and fun to catch. You will often find them in large schools, and can catch dozens of them. They have an extremely good flavor meat when cooked, and you can find them in just about any pond, lake, or river in the US. They are one of my favorite fish for their easiness to catch. Usually if I'm not catching much else I can still catch sunfish. Larger ones of more than 6 inches can be fun on ultralite tackle. Fishing for any species of the sunfish mentioned above is pretty much the same as the techniques mentioned for Bluegill below.

## Habitat

Bluegills prefer the quiet, weedy waters where they can hide and feed. They inhabit lakes and ponds, slow-flowing rivers and streams with sand, mud, or gravel bottoms, near aquatic vegetation.

## Spawning Habits

Bluegills are well known for "bedding" in large groups, with their circular beds touching one another. Bedding occurs in water two to six feet deep over sand, shell or gravel, and often among plant roots when the bottom is soft. Spawning occurs from April through October with the peak in May and June, when water temperature rises to about 78-80 degrees. A female may lay 2,000 to 63,000 eggs, which hatch 30 to 35 hours after fertilization.

## Feeding Habits

*Being the smallest fish around, they have to be willing to eat pretty much anything they can get!*

worms  
crickets/grasshoppers  
hot dog  
cheese  
dough balls  
corn  
marshmallows  
popping bugs  
small spinners  
artificial flies

## Sporting Qualities

Because of its willingness to take a variety of natural baits (e.g., crickets, grass shrimp, worms) and artificial lures (e.g., small spinners or popping bugs) during the entire year, its gameness when hooked, and its excellent food qualities, the bluegill is one of the easiest fish to catch during the warm part of the year. Fish have to eat in cold weather, but they don't eat as much and they tend to go into deeper water where they are harder to find.



During warm weather you'll find them in fresh water between six inches and six feet.

Often they form large groups when they "bed". If you see round sandy spots of something that looks like moon craters then you might have found bluegill on the bed.

Bedding is referring to the time when the fish raise there eggs in the sand. The bigger fish will be in the center of the patches.

**You can't lose when you find that.**

### **Eating Quality**

Excellent; the flesh is white, flaky, firm and sweet. They are generally rolled in cornmeal or dipped in pancake batter before frying. Many rank the bluegill as the most delicious of all freshwater fish.

### **Fishing for Bluegill**

Bluegills congregate in schools and tend to live close to structure such as submerged trees, rocks or weedbeds, docks and even the shoreline. Trophy fish are more solitary and usually stay deeper than their smaller kin. Though bluegills may sometimes be caught through the ice in late winter, they generally do not begin feeding actively until water temperature warms to 50 degrees F. They feed on insects, crustaceans and small fish, relying heavily on scent to help them verify prey items. Especially in cool waters of early springtime, the natural scent of live baits, or adding commercial scents to artificial lures, may increase the number of bites.

As water temperature approaches 60 degrees, bluegills begin feeding heavily in preparation for the spring spawning period. They move into shallow water where sunlight helps warm their environment and jump-starts submerged vegetation growth and invertebrate activity. At this time, bluegills can be caught with insect larvae such as wax worms, on 1/64th oz. jigs, or on wet nymph imitations using fly-fishing gear.

Slow presentations are crucial, since the fish are not yet active enough to chase fast-moving lures.

Spawning occurs when water temperature reaches 69 degrees in water 2 to 3 feet deep. It is during spawn that all panfish are easiest to catch. Fish return to the same spawning beds year after year, so discovering a hotspot ensures fishing success every spring. Male fish sweep out circular depressions in sandy bottoms, and then fertilize the eggs when females visit the nests. Males guard the hatching fry for several days, and then leave the young to fend for themselves.

During the spawning period, adult males will attack any lure that comes near the nest.

Some anglers use topwater popping bugs in shallow water to enjoy the action of surfacing bluegills. Better yet is the use of small jigs or spinners that work deeper

through the nest zones. One tried-and-true method uses live crickets fished under a bobber. However one goes about it, the key is using baits or lures small enough for the tiny mouths of sunfish. When seeking trophy bluegills, minnows or minnow-imitation lures may be most productive.

Equipment need not be expensive. A simple cane pole with attached line has accounted for untold numbers of panfish. Spinning gear, open- or closed-faced, is adequate. Ultralight gear brings out the best battles with sunfish, and therefore is more fun to fish with, yet fly-fishing gear is also ideal. Large bluegills tend to be line-shy, so it's best to use 4-pound-test line (or lighter) that is invisible in the water. When bobbers are used, small pencil models will outperform the plastic ball-shaped bobbers, though both will get the job done. Generally, hooks should be in the range of size 6 to size 10 for best success. Decent panfishing gear can usually be purchased at discount stores for about \$25



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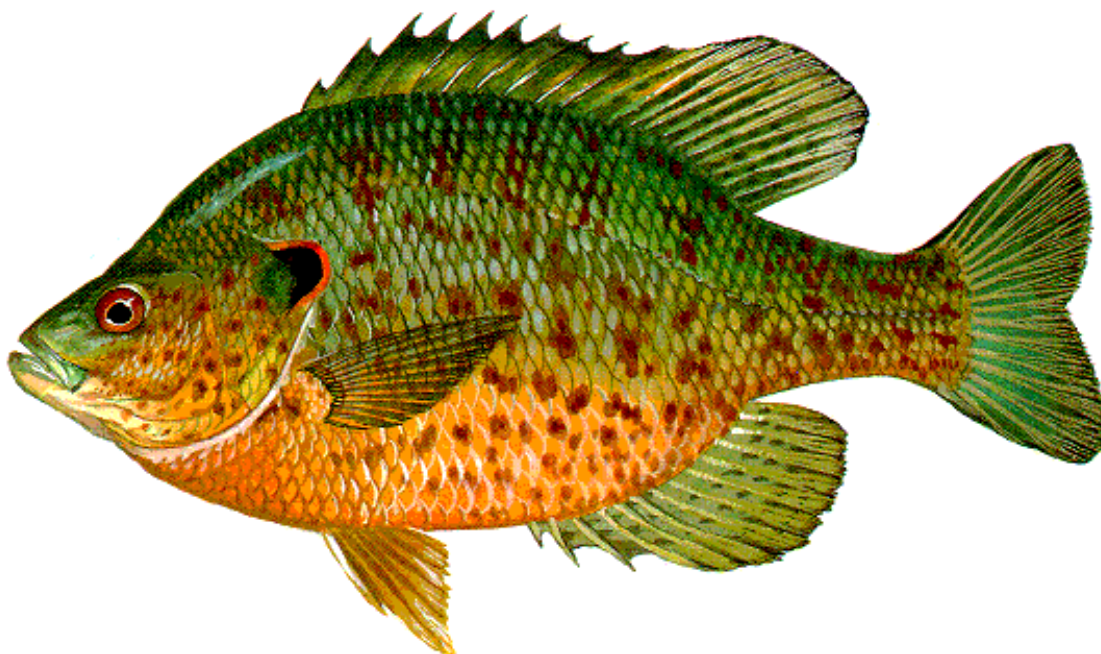
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## Redear Sunfish

(*Lepomis microlophus*)



**Common Names** - Widely known as shellcracker because of its fondness for snails. Also called bream, yellow bream.

**Description** - The redear is similar in shape to the bluegill, but lacks the dark spot at the base of the posterior portion of the dorsal fin and has a red or orange border around the "ear" flap. The body coloration is light olive-green to gold, with red or orange flecks on the breast. The breast of a mature redear is typically a rather bright yellow. The body is heavily spotted and they have long, pointed pectoral fins. Five to 10 vertical bars are more or less evident on the sides, depending on the size of the fish. Males and females are similar in appearance, although the male is generally more colorful.

The Bluegill and other species of the sunfish family make up some of the most common and fished for fish in the US. Although relatively small (usually less than ten inches, rarely over a pound) bluegills and other sunfish are easy and fun to catch. You will often find them in large schools, and can catch dozens of them. They have an extremely good flavor meat when cooked, and you can find them in just about any

pond, lake, or river in the US. They are one of my favorite fish for their easiness to catch. Usually if I'm not catching much else I can still catch sunfish. Larger ones of more than 6 inches can be fun on ultralite tackle. Fishing for any species of the sunfish mentioned above is pretty much the same as the techniques mentioned for Bluegill below.

**Habitat** - Redear are found in almost every freshwater aquatic system in Florida. They are typically found on sandy or shell-covered areas of ponds and lakes, and are often located near grasses. Redear spend a great deal of time offshore in open water, particularly in the winter. Other redeer found in rivers prefer, quiet waters and have a tendency to congregate around stumps, roots and logs. They are common in lower, more slowly flowing reaches of rivers. They tolerate brackish water better than other sunfish. Like black bass and spotted sunfish, they may be abundant in tidal areas near the mouths of rivers.

**Spawning Habits** - Spawning occurs during May, June and July (March through August in central Florida) when water temperatures reach 70 degrees. They prefer water three to four feet deep, and a firm, shelly bottom, often near a dropoff. Nesting sites are often near aquatic vegetation such as water lilies, cattails, lizardtails, and maidencane. Breeding behavior is similar to other sunfish, with the males doing the nest building and guarding the young. A female may lay between 15,000 to 30,000 eggs during a spawn.

**Feeding Habits** - Redears are opportunistic bottom feeders, foraging mainly during daylight hours on a variety of invertebrates. Important food items include snails and clams which are crushed by grinding teeth in the throat; larval insects, fish eggs, small fish, and crustaceans. In some areas snails may be secondary to insects as a food preference.

**Sporting Quality** - Strong fighters, but more difficult to catch than most other sunfish. The redeer does not readily take artificial lures but is easily taken on natural baits. Most fish are taken on cane poles with small hooks, corks, and split shot for weight. Favorite baits are worms, crickets, grubs, and shrimp fished in the spring and summer during the bedding season. Later in the season they move to much deeper water or into heavy cover, where they are difficult to locate.

**Techniques** - First of all you don't want to spook the fish with heavy line, don't use line over four pound test. Look at your summer fishing tackle and make everything smaller. Use smaller hooks with wax worms. You may want to use a small ice fly tipped with a wax worm. Experiment with colors of the ice fly until you find one that triggers a bite. Another way to trigger bites from inactive sunfish, jig your lure slowly and then allow it to sit still because the sunfish won't hit it when it is moving. And finally an important part beginners often overlook is bobbers. Don't use that clumsy red and white bobber. If you must use a bobber make it as thin and small as possible. Some people prefer sponge bobbers or slip bobbers but I like to use spring bobbers.

**Eating Quality** - Similar to that of bluegill, with white, flaky, sweet-tasting meat. Prepared the same as bluegill.

**World Record** - 5 pounds, 3 ounces.

## **Fishing for Sunfish**

use ultralite tackle and light line (2-6lb test)

Most of the year sunfish stay in shallow water. Sunfish stay in shallow water throughout the spring and summer usually going no deeper than 20 feet deep.

In the late fall, winter and/or ice fishing season look for them in deeper water (9-30 feet deep).

In a lake that has a variety of other sunfish it is almost impossible to try to single out and catch one of the species. Sunfish will stick in the same areas and eat mostly the same food.

Often the most effective bait and rig for sunnies is a bobber or slip bobber rig with a #6 or #8 hook with corn, worms or a small leech. Make sure the bobber is small and sensitive, using stick like bobbers rather than round bobbers will improve your results.

Sunfish will also feed off the bottom, espically the larger ones. Use a small 1/8-1/4 oz. sliding sinker and a 12 inch leader of the same or lighter line, or use a few small splitshot and no bobber. This method is often more effective when the water is choppy and/or the fish are sluggish. Corn or worms are the best choices for this type of rig.

When aggressive enough, the leech is a better option, it will stay on the hook better and often discourages the smaller ones and entices the larger sunfish to bite it. Make sure it is small (about an inch in length).

Earthworms are also a good choice, they are less expensive and easier to get/keep than leeches and are better for sunfish when they are picky. It is easier for them to pick the worm off the hook and you will catch a lot of smaller ones this way.

Corn on a bobber or bottom rig works too. It is a good choice for larger sunfish. Not as productive as leeches and worms, but a lot more economical and easier to keep, it is often a good bait to use. Smaller sunfish have a problem getting the corn in their mouths, but its often not as effective as live bait. Canned sweet corn, or sweet corn off a fresh cob (make sure the corn is soft) usually works the best. Put 2-3 kernels on a bobber rig or bottom rig mentioned above. Frozen and field corn aren't generally very productive so try to avoid using them.

Crappie minnows can also work. Fish them much the same as you would for crappies. This bait will catch mostly bigger ones only.

For artificial baits, small tube jigs, flu flus and beetle spins are good choices for sunfish (1/32oz-1/8oz). Make sure you use an ultralite rod so you can cast these tiny baits and also feel when a sunfish strikes.


Sunfish are common and fun to catch through the ice. Use a very small jigging spoon


(1/32 or 1/64 oz even) or small jig and tip it with a wax worm, maggots or a small minnow. Use a very small slip bobber much smaller than you would use for regular fishing. Set the hook earlier than you normally would, they aren't as aggressive and less likely to pull it as far under the ice. During ice cover they tend to stay close to the bottom; from a few inches off to about 3 feet. Also use extremely light line no more than 4lb test in the winter because they become very spooky and can see a notice heavier lines.

**MAKE SURE IT IS MONOFILAMENT!**



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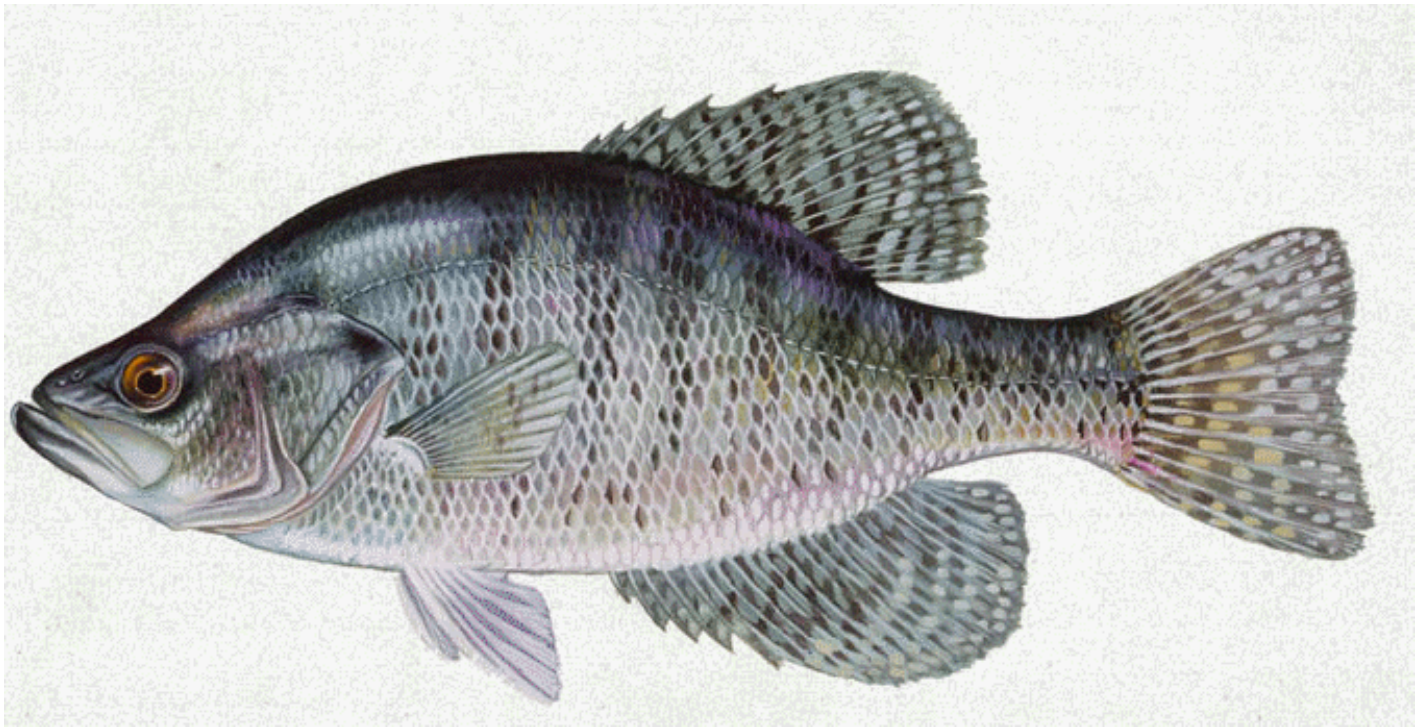
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 **Crappie**

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**Black Crappie**  
*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*



### White Crappie

*Pomoxis annularis*

The best way to differentiate these two fish are by counting dorsal fin spines, as the white crappie has 6 and the black crappie has 7 to 8. The white crappie is also the only sunfish with the same number of spines in both the dorsal and anal fins. The breeding white male grows darker in color and is often mistaken for a black crappie.

<b>Black Crappie</b>			<b>White Crappie</b>		
<a href="#">[Common Names]</a>	<a href="#">[Description]</a>	<a href="#">[Habitat]</a>	<a href="#">[Common Names]</a>	<a href="#">[Diet]</a>	<a href="#">[Habitat]</a>
<a href="#">[Spawning Habits]</a>	<a href="#">[Feeding Habits]</a>		<a href="#">[Length]</a>	<a href="#">[Identification]</a>	
<a href="#">[Sporting Quality]</a>	<a href="#">[Eating Quality]</a>				

#### [Fishing for Crappies](#)

# Black Crappie

## Common Names

speckled perch, specks, papermouth, bachelor perch, calico bass, strawberry bass, or white perch.

## Description

The black crappie is a silvery-green to yellowish fish with large dorsal and anal fins of almost identical shape and size. The sides



are marked with black blotches which become more intense towards the back. The dorsal, anal, and caudal fins also are marked with rows of dark spots. Crappies have compressed bodies, small heads and arched backs. It has a large mouth with an upper jaw extending under the eye.

The Black Crappie is one of the largest and most popular panfish. They can reach up to 3 pounds in weight, and have an excellent flavor for eating. They are common in many lakes and ponds in the US and are sometimes found in small rivers and streams. They are also known as "paper mouths" because of their large thin lips. Like most panfish, they are a schooling fish and usually stay in schools of 5 to 25. In the spring in fall they come into shallow water and tend to stay in mid depth to deeper water during the summer. They are one of the most common fish caught through the ice, and are willing to bite through-out the year if you can locate them. They will often mix in with other schools of other panfish such as Bluegill and green sunfish. They are one of the few panfish that readily take artificial baits; tube jigs and flu flus are your best bet. At times crappie can be difficult to catch.

## **Habitat**

*(where they live and hang around)*

Black crappies thrive in clear, natural lakes and reservoirs with moderate vegetation. They are also found in large slow-moving less turbid rivers, provided the water is not too murky. Crappies prefer water from 70 to 75 degrees but will tolerate water over 80 degrees. It is gregarious and often travels in schools.

## **Spawning Habits**

*(where they lay their eggs)*

Spawning occurs from February to April when water temperatures reach 62 to 65 degrees. They nest in colonies. Circular nest are fanned by males over gravel or soft-muddy bottoms and frequently around submerged vegetation in waters from three to eight feet deep. After spawning, males guard the eggs and fry. Females may produce between 11,000 and 188,000 eggs.

**Feeding Habits**

*(what they like to eat)*

Natural baits include  
crustaceans  
aquatic insects  
shiners  
worms  
small minnows  
and small fishes.

Adults mainly eat small fish, particularly open-water forage fish, like threadfin shad.

Artificials include:

jigs  
crankbaits  
spinners  
and flies

**Sporting Quality**

Black crappies are excellent game fish and are highly regarded by bait fishermen and artificial-lure anglers alike. They are easily caught during prespawning periods when the fish are congregated in large schools. Trolling with small, live minnows or a spinner-fly combination is very productive. They will also strike subsurface flies, small spinners, jigs, and tiny crankbaits. Crappies tend to suspend in midwater, so you may have to experiment to find the right depth.

The difference with crappie is that you will use minnows and you will not fish on the bottom. They will be suspended in brush such as a fallen tree. Also you will use a #2 wire hook with the minnow hooked so that it can stay alive and swim around for as long as possible.  
A float sets the depth.

### **Eating Quality**

Considered to be excellent eating by many anglers. The meat is prepared by rolling in cornmeal or dipping in pancake batter and deep frying, and can also be baked or broiled.

# **White Crappie**

### **Other Common Names**

Silver crappie, bachelor, white perch, sac-a-lait, newlight, strawberry bass, goggle eye, papermouth, tin mouth, bachelor perch, slab

## **Diet**

*(what they like to eat)*

Feeds on fish and insects

You can catch Crappie with minnows, worms, jigs & artificial spinners

## **Habitat**

*(where they live and hang around)*

Prefers clear water with aquatic vegetation, will tolerate some muddy water

## **Length**

Average length is 6 to 14 inches

## **Identification**

Silvery body that shades to green or brown on the back; several (7-9) dark vertical bars on each side and whitish belly; "hump-backed" with 6 spines in the dorsal fin; seldom exceed 2 pounds

## **Fishing for Crappies**

use light line 4-6 lb test

The use of an ultralite rod is nice for getting some fight out of them and is necessary when using small jigs and baits.

The best live bait for crappies is small minnows, also known as "crappie minnows"

Crappies also take small artificial baits as well. Use a slip bobber rig you'd normally use for live bait but tie on a small jig hook (1/16-1/8 oz) and put a tube jig on it. This rig is especially productive with a little chop on the waves. Also jigging a small flu flu or tube jig off the bottom can also be productive.

In early spring look for crappies in medium water; about 12 feet deep or so. Crappies are one of the first fish to become active after the ice gets off a lake in the Northern US, and one of the first panfish to start spawning.

When spawning time arrives look for crappies in shallow water, this is when shore fishing is most productive.

Crappies are harder to find in the summer, they move into deeper water and their schools often scatter.

As the water cools in the fall, crappies will move back into shallow areas for a short period of time before the fall turnover when they will move into their winter positions.

For winter and ice fishing, look for them in medium to deep water. They still stay in schools in the winter, and ice fishing for crappies can be as or more productive than in the open water season.



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RECYCLE-A-BIKE

BIKE SALE



# Flier

(*Centrarchus macropterus*)



[\[Common Names\]](#) [\[Description\]](#) [\[Habitat\]](#) [\[Spawning Habits\]](#) [\[Feeding Habits\]](#) [\[Sporting Qualities\]](#)  
[\[Eating Qualities\]](#)

## Common Names

round sunfish and millpond flier.

## Description

The flier is a small sunfish that has a strongly compressed, deep, round body and small mouth. The coloration is greenish or silver green to brown on back and sides with a cream or yellowish belly with a brown dot on each scale giving the appearance of numerous rows of dots. Young fish have a large black spot surrounded by bright orange in the soft rays of the dorsal fin. A dark vertical streak is present below the eye and extends to the lower edge of the operculum. The dorsal and anal fins are nearly symmetrical.

## Habitat

They inhabit dark, acidic waters of coastal swamps, creeks, ponds, and canals. They prefer heavily vegetated water and are often found under mats of floating vegetation.

Fliers can tolerate waters too acidic for other sunfish. They prefer water temperatures from 75 to 85 degrees.

### **Spawning Habits**

Spawning begins in March when water temperatures reach 62 to 68 degrees. The male prepares a nest and the female lays from 5,000 to 50,000 eggs. Nesting may be solitary or in small colonies. Males continuously guard the eggs and recently hatched young.

### **Feeding Habits**

Fliers are carnivorous in their feeding habits. They prefer insects, crustaceans, mollusks, worms, leeches, and small fish are supplemented with small quantities of phytoplankton.

### **Sporting Qualities**

Although fliers fight well for their size, they are often too small to generate much interest among anglers. Fliers can be caught on dry flies, tiny poppers, worms, insect larvae and small minnows. Good fishing locations are around cypress trees and stumps, near brush piles, and at the mouths of small creeks and canals.

### **Eating Qualities**

The flesh is sweet and excellent to eat. The same methods of cooking other sunfish apply for fliers.





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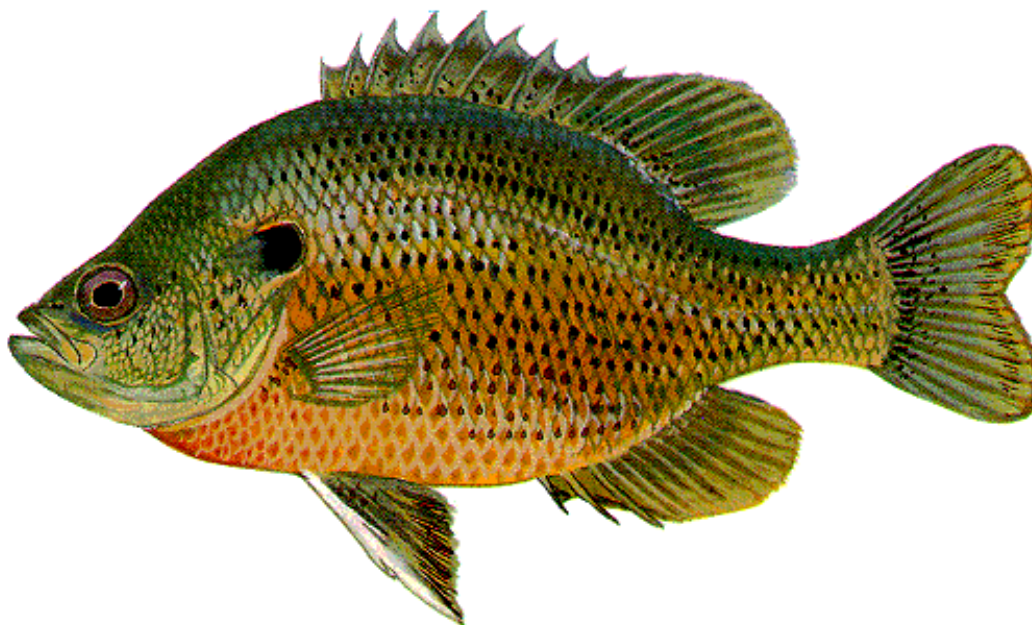
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## Spotted Sunfish

(*Lepomis auritus*)



**Common Names** - redbelly, robin, yellowbelly sunfish, bream, river bream, longear sunfish, sun perch and redbreast bream.

**Description** - The redbreast is one of the brightest colored sunfishes. Males have yellow, orange or red breast, olive upper sides, blending into blue-tinged bronze on the lower sides and blue streaks on the cheek. Females are less colorful; their breasts are yellowish or pale red. The most distinguishing characteristic of this species is a long, narrow (no wider than the eye) extension of the gill cover. These flaps, which may reach a length of one inch or more, are entirely black.

The Bluegill and other species of the sunfish family make up some of the most common and fished for fish in the US. Although relatively small (usually less than ten inches, rarely over a pound) bluegills and other sunfish are easy and fun to catch. You will often find them in large schools, and can catch dozens of them. They have an extremely good flavor meat when cooked, and you can find them in just about any pond, lake, or river in the US. They are one of my favorite fish for their easiness to catch. Usually if I'm not catching much else I can still catch sunfish. Larger ones of

more than 6 inches can be fun on ultralite tackle. Fishing for any species of the sunfish mentioned above is pretty much the same as the techniques mentioned for Bluegill below.

**Habitat** - Redbreasts inhabit sand-bottom areas as well as rocky areas of coastal-plain streams, rivers, and lakes. They frequently concentrate around boulders, limestone outcroppings, logs, aquatic vegetation, or in undercut tree roots.

**Spawning Habits** - They reproduce in typical sunfish fashion by constructing circular beds; but not clustered like bluegills, in water from one to three feet deep usually adjacent underwater objects such as stumps and snags. They often occupy beds that have been abandoned by other sunfishes. Spawning occurs from May through August when water temperatures range from 68 to 82 degrees. Males are the nest builders and guard the eggs and larvae for a short period after hatching. The number of eggs laid in a season ranges from about 1,000 to 10,000, varying with the age and size of the female.

**Feeding Habits** - The redbreast's diet is probably the most varied of any of the sunfishes. Principal food organisms are bottom-dwelling insect larvae, snails, clams, shrimp, crayfish, and small fish.

**Sporting Qualities** - Redbreasts are prized game fish and are caught on natural baits and artificial lures. They are good fighters and will bite on flies and small spinners, as well as worms, crickets, grasshoppers and small minnows. Unlike most sunfishes, redbreasts bite well at night. Fishing from a drifting or slowly powered boat is the best way to catch redbreasts, although angling from the bank can be productive.

**Techniques** - First of all you don't want to spook the fish with heavy line, don't use line over four pound test. Look at your summer fishing tackle and make everything smaller. Use smaller hooks with wax worms. You may want to use a small ice fly tipped with a wax worm. Experiment with colors of the ice fly until you find one that triggers a bite. Another way to trigger bites from inactive sunfish, jig your lure slowly and then allow it to sit still because the sunfish won't hit it when it is moving. And finally an important part beginners often overlook is bobbers. Don't use that clumsy red and white bobber. If you must use a bobber make it as thin and small as possible. Some people prefer sponge bobbers or slip bobbers but I like to use spring bobbers.

**Eating Quality** - The sweet, flaky, white flesh is excellent eating. They are most often fried after dipping them in seasoned cornmeal or pancake batter.

## Fishing for Sunfish

use ultralite tackle and light line (2-6lb test)

Most of the year sunfish stay in shallow water. Sunfish stay in shallow water throughout the spring and summer usually going no deeper than 20 feet deep.

In the late fall, winter and/or ice fishing season look for them in deeper water (9-30 feet deep).

In a lake that has a variety of other sunfish it is almost impossible to try to single out and catch one of the species. Sunfish will stick in the same areas and eat mostly the same food.

Often the most effective bait and rig for sunnies is a bobber or slip bobber rig with a #6 or #8 hook with corn, worms or a small leech. Make sure the bobber is small and sensitive, using stick like bobbers rather than round bobbers will improve your results.

Sunfish will also feed off the bottom, especially the larger ones. Use a small 1/8-1/4 oz. sliding sinker and a 12 inch leader of the same or lighter line, or use a few small splitshot and no bobber. This method is often more effective when the water is choppy and/or the fish are sluggish. Corn or worms are the best choices for this type of rig.

When aggressive enough, the leech is a better option, it will stay on the hook better and often discourages the smaller ones and entices the larger sunfish to bite it. Make sure it is small (about an inch in length).

Earthworms are also a good choice, they are less expensive and easier to get/keep than leeches and are better for sunfish when they are picky. It is easier for them to pick the worm off the hook and you will catch a lot of smaller ones this way.

Corn on a bobber or bottom rig works too. It is a good choice for larger sunfish. Not as productive as leeches and worms, but a lot more economical and easier to keep, it is often a good bait to use. Smaller sunfish have a problem getting the corn in their mouths, but its often not as effective as live bait. Canned sweet corn, or sweet corn off a fresh cob (make sure the corn is soft) usually works the best. Put 2-3 kernels on a bobber rig or bottom rig mentioned above. Frozen and field corn aren't generally very productive so try to avoid using them.

Crappie minnows can also work. Fish them much the same as you would for crappies. This bait will catch mostly bigger ones only.

For artificial baits, small tube jigs, flu flus and beetle spins are good choices for sunfish (1/32oz-1/8oz). Make sure you use an ultralite rod so you can cast these tiny baits and also feel when a sunfish strikes.

Sunfish are common and fun to catch through the ice. Use a very small jigging spoon (1/32 or 1/64 oz even) or small jig and tip it with a wax worm, maggots or a small minnow. Use a very small slip bobber much smaller than you would use for regular fishing. Set the hook earlier then you normally would, they aren't as aggressive and less likely to pull it as far under the ice. During ice cover they tend to stay close to the bottom; from a few inches off to about 3 feet. Also use extremely light line no more than 4lb test in the winter because they become very spooky and can see a notice heavier lines.

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are a very colorful, deep-bodied, slab-sided fish with a small
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are found in shallow ponds and lakes in weed beds, under brush and
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sunfish are nest spawners with the male digging the nest in water as shallow as 6 to 12 inches. Spawning occurs in May or June and the males guard the nest until the eggs hatch. The female will lay between 1,600 to 2,900 eggs. Several females may lay eggs in a single nest. Adult pumpkinseed eat primarily larval insects, some adult insects, and occasionally larval fish. Pumpkinseed growth is similar to that of bluegills.</FONT></FONT></FONT></P>

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for pumpkinseed sunfish is similar to fishing for bluegill sunfish. The best method is to use natural baits, such as worms, with small hooks and light lines. In addition, small spinner baits and flies can also be used. Anglers should concentrate along the edges of dense vegetation or woody debris.</FONT></FONT></FONT></P>

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<FONT SIZE="4"><FONT FACE="Comic Sans MS,Comic Sans,Times New Roman"><FONT COLOR="BLUE">cheese</FONT></FONT></FONT><BR>

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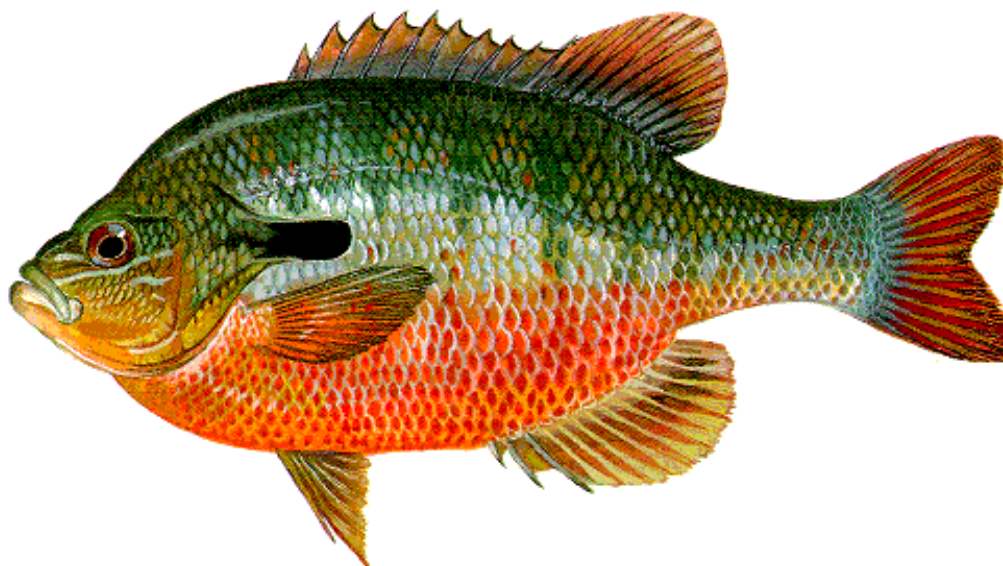
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## Redbreast Sunfish

(*Lepomis auritus*)



**Common Names** - redbelly, robin, yellowbelly sunfish, bream, river bream, longear sunfish, sun perch and redbreast bream.

**Description** - The redbreast is one of the brightest colored sunfishes. Males have yellow, orange or red breast, olive upper sides, blending into blue-tinged bronze on the lower sides and blue streaks on the cheek. Females are less colorful; their breasts are yellowish or pale red. The most distinguishing characteristic of this species is a long, narrow (no wider than the eye) extension of the gill cover. These flaps, which may reach a length of one inch or more, are entirely black.

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Bluegill below.

**Habitat** - Redbreasts inhabit sand-bottom areas as well as rocky areas of coastal-plain streams, rivers, and lakes. They frequently concentrate around boulders, limestone outcroppings, logs, aquatic vegetation, or in undercut tree roots.

**Spawning Habits** - They reproduce in typical sunfish fashion by constructing circular beds; but not clustered like bluegills, in water from one to three feet deep usually adjacent underwater objects such as stumps and snags. They often occupy beds that have been abandoned by other sunfishes. Spawning occurs from May through August when water temperatures range from 68 to 82 degrees. Males are the nest builders and guard the eggs and larvae for a short period after hatching. The number of eggs laid in a season ranges from about 1,000 to 10,000, varying with the age and size of the female.

**Feeding Habits** - The redbreast's diet is probably the most varied of any of the sunfishes. Principal food organisms are bottom-dwelling insect larvae, snails, clams, shrimp, crayfish, and small fish.

**Sporting Qualities** - Redbreasts are prized game fish and are caught on natural baits and artificial lures. They are good fighters and will bite on flies and small spinners, as well as worms, crickets, grasshoppers and small minnows. Unlike most sunfishes, redbreasts bite well at night. Fishing from a drifting or slowly powered boat is the best way to catch redbreasts, although angling from the bank can be productive.

**Techniques** - First of all you don't want to spook the fish with heavy line, don't use line over four pound test. Look at your summer fishing tackle and make everything smaller. Use smaller hooks with wax worms. You may want to use a small ice fly tipped with a wax worm. Experiment with colors of the ice fly until you find one that triggers a bite. Another way to trigger bites from inactive sunfish, jig your lure slowly and then allow it to sit still because the sunfish won't hit it when it is moving. And finally an important part beginners often overlook is bobbers. Don't use that clumsy red and white bobber. If you must use a bobber make it as thin and small as possible. Some people prefer sponge bobbers or slip bobbers but I like to use spring bobbers.

**Eating Quality** - The sweet, flaky, white flesh is excellent eating. They are most often fried after dipping them in seasoned cornmeal or pancake batter.

**World Record** - 1 pound, 12 ounces, caught in the Suwannee River, Florida, in 1984.

## **Fishing for Sunfish**

use ultralite tackle and light line (2-6lb test)

Most of the year sunfish stay in shallow water. Sunfish stay in shallow water throughout the spring and summer usually going no deeper than 20 feet deep.

In the late fall, winter and/or ice fishing season look for them in deeper water (9-30 feet deep).

In a lake that has a variety of other sunfish it is almost impossible to try to single out and catch one of the species. Sunfish will stick in the same areas and eat mostly the same food.

Often the most effective bait and rig for sunnies is a bobber or slip bobber rig with a #6 or #8 hook with corn, worms or a small leech. Make sure the bobber is small and sensitive, using stick like bobbers rather than round bobbers will improve your results.

Sunfish will also feed off the bottom, especially the larger ones. Use a small 1/8-1/4 oz. sliding sinker and a 12 inch leader of the same or lighter line, or use a few small splitshot and no bobber. This method is often more effective when the water is choppy and/or the fish are sluggish. Corn or worms are the best choices for this type of rig.

When aggressive enough, the leech is a better option, it will stay on the hook better and often discourages the smaller ones and entices the larger sunfish to bite it. Make sure it is small (about an inch in length).

Earthworms are also a good choice, they are less expensive and easier to get/keep than leeches and are better for sunfish when they are picky. It is easier for them to pick the worm off the hook and you will catch a lot of smaller ones this way.

Corn on a bobber or bottom rig works too. It is a good choice for larger sunfish. Not as productive as leeches and worms, but a lot more economical and easier to keep, it is often a good bait to use. Smaller sunfish have a problem getting the corn in their mouths, but its often not as effective as live bait. Canned sweet corn, or sweet corn off a fresh cob (make sure the corn is soft) usually works the best. Put 2-3 kernels on a bobber rig or bottom rig mentioned above. Frozen and field corn aren't generally very productive so try to avoid using them.

Crappie minnows can also work. Fish them much the same as you would for crappies. This bait will catch mostly bigger ones only.


For artificial baits, small tube jigs, flu flus and beetle spins are good choices for sunfish (1/32oz-1/8oz). Make sure you use an ultralite rod so you can cast these tiny baits and also feel when a sunfish strikes.



Sunfish are common and fun to catch through the ice. Use a very small jigging spoon (1/32 or 1/64 oz even) or small jig and tip it with a wax worm, maggots or a small minnow. Use a very small slip bobber much smaller than you would use for regular fishing. Set the hook earlier then you normally would, they aren't as aggressive and less likely to pull it as far under the ice. During ice cover they tend to stay close to the bottom; from a few inches off to about 3 feet. Also use extremely light line no more than 4lb test in the winter because they become very spooky and can see a notice heavier lines.

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 **Fishing from Boats**

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If you decide to try fishing from a boat, there is a lot to know before you go.

**You need to know about:**

The boat and how it handles.

The equipment on the boat and how it works.

The waters you will be boating on and any hazards such as submerged trees and rocks.

The weather conditions and emergency procedures.

The safety devices on the boat and how they work.

Your own personal abilities-how much you can do before you become too tired.

**As the operator of a boat you are legally responsible for the boat and the safety of those on board.**

**You must also understand the rules of navigation and the courtesies of safe boating. Always complete a boater safety course prior to operating a boat for the first time.**

## **Fishing from boats can be made safer through the following steps:**

- \* Have your boat and motor serviced regularly.
- \* Boat sea worthiness and capabilities are important.  
Update your boating knowledge  
and  
practise your skills.  
Ask for local information if hiring a boat and pay attention to all  
instructions.  
They could save your life.
- \* Check fuel levels - work out what you might need, then take around  
twice as much.  
Running out of fuel is one of the most common reasons for requiring  
emergency services.  
Ensure that your fuel is fresh.
- \* Always carry tools and spare parts like spark plugs. Spare fuel line,  
shear pins and propeller.
- \* Keep bilges clear and ensure that there is no build up of fuel or fumes.
  - \* Always carry safety gear and ensure it is in good working order.
- \* Make sure life jackets can be easily accessed - if you need them in a  
hurry they won't be much use to you if kept in a locked compartment or  
below deck.
- \* **Children and poor swimmers should wear life jackets at all times**
- \* Tell a responsible person where you are going and when you will be  
returning.
  - \* Twin motors offer a backup if one of the motors breaks down.
- \* If possible, fish with someone else, so that if you are injured your

partner will be able to call for help.

- \* Do not attempt to fish on the whitewater wash zone around rocks, shore, offshore reefs or other structures.
- \* Regularly check weather reports through the local volunteer sea rescue facility, or the Weather Bureau on telephone.
  - \* If the weather looks threatening, head for home.

In an electrical storm, get off the lake and out of your boat.  
Always follow the golden safety rule of fishing:

### **When in doubt, wait it out!**

- \* Small boats can be tipped over.  
Put the load in the centre of the boat and don't overload.

When travelling, take waves on the forequarters.

- \* Ensure your boat is positively buoyant and will float even if overturned.  
It is generally better to stay with the boat if it does overturn.

### **Don't abandon ship**

If your boat gets swamped, stay with it.  
Most people overestimate their swimming ability.  
Boats usually stay afloat and drift to shore.

- \* If running a bar or reef gap, watch the swells carefully for at least 10 minutes before attempting the run. It is preferable to attempt these crossings with another boat, but go one at a time.
- \* Take special care when launching and retrieving boats, as crushing injuries are common.
- \* Do not attempt to take large and underplayed fish into small boats. Sharks, tuna, marlin and others can cause significant damage.
- \* Keep fluids up when fishing. Alcohol is not recommended because it



can induce dehydration, impair judgement and may lead to prosecution for driving a boat under the influence if consumed in significant quantities.

Carry spare water and food in case your boat breaks down.

- \* Carefully store sharp implements such as knives and gaffs.
- \* In an emergency use your radio, set off your EPIRB\* and use your flares when appropriate.

Setting off an EPIRB will initiate a wide-scale search that could save your life. If you accidentally set off an EPIRB, advise the authorities immediately.

**EPIRB = Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon**



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## **Fishing from rocky areas**

Rock fishing is arguably the most dangerous sport in the world and lives are lost undertaking this activity every year. Many of these deaths could be avoided if the following advice was put into practice:

- \* No fish is worth your life.

Many accidents occur when people move to lower levels to land fish.

- \* King waves are a myth. Wave dynamics have been studied around the world and although large waves can form, these are due to the combination of sea, swell and the formation from which the person is fishing. Large waves don't strike at random - fishers and others put themselves in a position where they are likely to be washed from the rocks.

- \* While many dangerous spots are signposted, many are not. If a safety harness is provided, use it.

- \* Before fishing, watch the prevailing conditions for at least 10 minutes. Take note of which rocks are wet and whether the rock pools are encrusted with salt.

- \* Select areas where the surface is not slippery or steep. These sites can be dangerous because they are difficult to climb should you accidentally fall or getwashed into the water.

\* When fishing from the rocks, look for an area that you can swim for should you be washed from the rocks. If there is a rip working, don't try to swim directly back against the rip or you will waste energy and may not be able to regain the land.

Swim diagonally across the rip until you are clear of it.

\* Have spare tackle and gear at hand so that snags can be cut off and lines repaired.

Do not try and retrieve tackle, especially in rocky, steep areas.

\* Wear shoes suited to the area you are fishing. Fishing from round boulders can be dangerous, as they become as slippery as ice when wet. Smooth or cleated shoes are dangerous in such conditions.

\* Wear shorts and other clothes that allow you to swim should you get washed into the water.

Heavy, wet weather gear, long trousers and woollen jumpers can hamper your swimming ability.

\* Keep a flotation device in your tackle box and wear one in areas where the swells can be large.

\* Always fish with a friend.

\* If your partner is washed into the water, never jump in to save him or her.

A bucket with a rope, your fishing rod or the line can be used as rescue devices, but don't recklessly risk your own life.

\* If a large wave is coming and you are fairly certain you will be washed off your fishing platform, jump into the water.

While this may seem like odd advice, statistics show that many fatalities are due by head injuries caused by the fisher being bounced on rocks by waves as they roll in and wash back.

\* Always tell someone where you are going and when you will come back.

If you change your plans, tell someone.

- \* If you are fishing with a handline, make sure you are not tangled with it should a large bite.

Fishing is an extremely popular and enjoyable activity, but it should also be a safe activity.

If you follow the advice on this page, you can enjoy your fishing and pass on your skills to your children and grandchildren.



Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



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**Be Sun Smart**

## **Be SunSmart - catch fish not skin cancer**

Recreational fishing is great fun, but skin cancer isn't. Unfortunately, fishing not only exposes you to direct ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun, but also reflected UVR from the water and other surroundings. It is now well known that cumulative sun exposure increases the risk of developing skin cancer and various eye conditions, such as cataracts. UVR has nothing to do with heat, so don't be fooled into believing sun protection is unnecessary when fishing in cool, cloudy conditions, as UVR will easily pass through cloud cover.

Being SunSmart when you are fishing is simple. The Cancer Foundation recommends the best way to reduce sun exposure when fishing is to:

- \* Avoid peak UVR hours of the day (between 10am and 3pm).
  - \* Wear sun protective Clothing such as:
    - \* A long-sleeved, high-necked or collared shirt
    - \* Trousers or longer length shorts
  - \* A broad brimmed hat or legionnaire-style cap

- \* Close fitting polarised sunglasses
- \* Fingerless driving gloves to cover the backs of your hands.
  - \* Wear sunscreen.

## **Sunscreen is a must when fishing**

The Cancer Foundation recommends applying a broad spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen 15 minutes before going out in the sun. It is very important to reapply sunscreen thickly at least every two hours - don't forget your face, ears, neck, and the backs of your hands and the tops of your feet. To avoid getting sunscreen on your bait (from your hands), choose a roll-on sunscreen for easy application. Store your sunscreen out of the sun, below 30degrees Celsius.

### **SPF (Sun Protection Factor)**



Early detection and treatment of skin cancer leads to a cure in over 95 percent of cases.

**Get all skin irregularities checked immediately by a doctor.**



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Types of Campgrounds

*Thousands of campgrounds stretch across the nation.*

*Some are at the end of dirt ruts and offer nothing more in the way of conveniences than a pump handle and a privy with a door that won't close. Others have live-in hosts, showers, laundry facilities, electrical hookups, and a complete schedule of organized activities.*

Public campgrounds are managed by federal, state, and local agencies. The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Forest Service, National Wildlife Refuge system, and individual state park systems all offer many camping opportunities.

Counties and townships also manage campgrounds.

Most public campgrounds are geared toward tent camping, although many offer a limited number of hookups for recreational vehicles.

National Park campgrounds are invariably clean and efficiently run.

Most provide amenities such as bathrooms with electrical lighting.

Sites are well patrolled and campers must observe strict quiet hours (usually between 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.),

which means you won't have to worry about noisy neighbors or disturbing generator hum.

As a bonus, park rangers lead nature walks and host evening campfire programs that are geared to both children and adults.

On the down side, because of concerns about erosion and preserving vistas for sightseers, camps are often tucked back into the forests, away from the rivers, lakes, and breathtaking vistas that these parks are noted for. Campsites are often pie-assigned at the gate and tend to be small, eroded by foot traffic, and built close together, although there are many exceptions.

National Park campsites usually come at a relatively high sticker price, too.

Popularity is another consideration.

During peak summer months, most national park campgrounds fill up daily.

The smaller campgrounds are usually first, come, first served;

some larger campgrounds offer reserved sites.



*Visit America's National Parks  
United States National Park Service Site*

National Forest service and Bureau of Land Management campgrounds range from remote and extremely primitive sites to well-maintained facilities with live-in campground hosts. Many Forest Service campgrounds strike a good balance between comfort and rugged outdoor living, offering well-spaced sites in a pristine setting, while providing basic amenities such as purified water, picnic tables, and, sometimes, indoor plumbing. They also tend to be less pricey and less crowded than national and state park campgrounds.

Many primitive forest and BLM (*Bureau of Land Management*) camps are free.

*[Get more detailed info on  
Bureau of Land Management  
campgrounds HERE!](#)*



*[Find Recreation Areas in your state at your BLM Website](#)*



*Visit America's National Forests  
National Forest Service Site*

## **FEDERAL LAND AGENCIES Address and Phone Numbers**

You can make activity-specific searches, including camping, for all federal lands through a single web site on the Internet at [www.Recreation.Gov](http://www.Recreation.Gov)

National Forest Service (NFS)  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 96090  
Washington, DC 20090-6090  
1-202-205-0957

National Park Service (NPS)  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, DC 20013-7127  
1-202-347-5668

National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Washington, DC  
1-202-208-4354

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street N.W  
Washington, DC 20240-000 1  
1-202-452-0330

Bureau of Reclamation  
Box 043  
550 West Fort St.  
Boise, ID 83724

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
3909 Halls Ferry Rd.  
Vicksburg, MS 39180-6199

Quite often, you can find overflow forest campgrounds outside park borders, built for campers who have arrived too late to secure a park campsite. Some are no better than parking lots. But the farther you get from park entrances, the more spacious campgrounds tend to be. For example, the road that follows the Shoshone River from Cody, Wyoming, to the east entrance of Yellowstone National Park passes through some of the nation's spectacular scenery, and the Forest Service campsites along the riverbank are strung out like emeralds pinned to a silver necklace. There's one that we go to regularly that we happened upon when The Main Campsite we intended to stay at was full and they detoured us here. I'm not going to reveal its location for it's our little get away and very secluded  
on a BIG Fishing (*well stocked*) Lake,  
very wooded with open areas also, unknown to many folks, etc.

Vacationers pass these half-campgrounds at 70 miles an hour, rushing to grab spaces 40 miles down the road that will be half as big, twice as expensive, and much less abundant in scenic charm.

State Park campgrounds are often among the most posh. A number visited on the Oregon coast have beautifully situated and well-spaced campsites; one park had walk-in sites on a bluff overlooking the surf. On the other hand, the most densely crowded campground was an Oregon state park, also on the coast, where tenters slept cheek to jowl, in the manner of Japanese businessmen cocooned in capsule motels in Tokyo.  
So it pays to do your homework first.

Municipality, township, and county campgrounds are sleepers, unmarked on most maps and unheralded by campground directories. They tend to be small, inexpensive, and surprisingly private. You can find them in the Yellow Pages of the telephone book.

Privately operated campgrounds offer an alternative to those run by public

agencies. Many are no more than glorified rest stops off the highways, catering to overnight travelers. Others are strictly RV parks, where your evening fire, if permitted, will not cast its reflection upon tent walls, but rather upon the gleaming surfaces of aluminum siding.

The popular KOA chain offers examples of campgrounds with a resort atmosphere, including showers, laundry facilities, putting greens, a general store, and other amenities that urbanize the experience.



[Click Here](#)

to locate a KOA Campground in your State

For those that want to really get back to nature, and go beyond the somewhat civilized campgrounds of state parks and the like, extreme primitive camping is the answer.

[Tell Me More!](#)

### **What Kind of Experience Are You Looking For?**

Choosing a campground should be based on family priorities. Not all of us are looking for the same experience.

If you and your children love to fish, you may be willing to bypass sites on a picturesque alpine lake that freezes solid in winter for one on a mosquito-ridden pond that is dimpled with the rings of rising trout.

[Need Fishing Tips?](#)

**FUNDAMENTALS  
OF  
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Some first-time campers may feel insecure in a primitive forest campground accessed by poor roads, and would utter a sigh of relief if they could trade solitude for the peace of mind found in a well-regulated facility with a live-in campground host.

Others aren't looking for any kind of wilderness experience at all. They desire nothing more than to pull their trailer onto a manicured lawn, set out a barbecue grill, and split time between the Jet Ski and the golf course.

Sensibilities must also be taken into consideration.

Most guys are perfectly content to stay in your basic water-pump and outhouse campground; some women I've camped with were not as happy with such Spartan facilities.

Children who have been brought up in tents seldom complain, regardless of gender.

But if you are new to camping and have a teenager who takes one look at the pit toilet and shakes her head in disgust, the odds of a first outing spawning a second will be considerably enhanced if you are willing to

sacrifice a bit of nature for the basic plumbing offered in another campground down the road.

As a rule, however, kids are not as critical as adults. It makes little difference to them if you pitch your tent in the campground's most spacious site or the one that is most cramped!

## Free Camping Possibilities!

Free campgrounds have other benefits besides saving you money. They are usually found in peaceful and scenic settings. Some are located by lakes or rivers and offer numerous recreational opportunities, such as boating, fishing, or water-skiing.

Here are some of the possibilities:

**National Forests:** You can legally camp anywhere on national forest land. Unfortunately much of the forest area is so dense that official camp sites are often hard to locate. Find any level spot on the edge of the campground. A map of the National Forest will show all the places you have to choose from!

**Long-Term Visitor Areas:** (LTVAs) The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) established nine LTVA's in 1983 in the California desert and along the lower Colorado River where visitors may camp for the entire winter. If you wish to stay in an LTVA you'll need to buy a long-term permit for \$25 and pick a location in one of the designated areas. This permit lasts from October 1 to May 31st. You may move from one LTVA to another without paying additional user fees. Guests may stay with permit holders during the season at no charge.

**City Parks:** Many cities allow over-night (dry) camping in their parks. Check the local Chamber of Commerce or police station about free places to spend a night.

As you negotiate the pages of road atlases, campground directories, and books when searching for campgrounds, it helps to understand a few key words commonly used to describe the facilities:

**Full hookup** indicates that the campground offers electrical hookups for recreational vehicles (RVs). Tent campers should always check the ratio of tent sites to RV sites with hookup. A high ratio of RV sites usually indicates a more urban camping experience, which is not what most tent campers are looking for.

**Dumping facilities** are underground waste disposal sites for RVs and trailers.

**Resort** doesn't identify a campground per se. However, many resorts do offer camping, but it usually won't be a wilderness experience.

**Primitive campgrounds** offer no hookups, no flush toilets, and sometimes no purified water. They may or may not have picnic tables. About all you can count on are pit toilets.

**Group tenting sites** are large sites for crowds, generally in the open.

**Walk-in sites** are far enough from the campground parking area that you will need to tote your supplies. In some campgrounds, the walk-in sites are reserved for hikers and bicycle campers.

**Wooded** indicates that the campground is built in a forest, which usually means a buffer of trees separate the sites, offering more privacy.

**Open** indicates the campground is built in a field, on the beach, or on a meadow of prairie grasses. The view of the countryside or ocean may compensate for the lack of privacy.

**Flush toilets** flush (usually).

**Pit toilets** range from dilapidated outhouses to cinder block palaces with chalet roofs, but both offer views of a hole in the ground.

Never count on finding toilet paper in an outhouse.



Bring a couple of rolls from home!

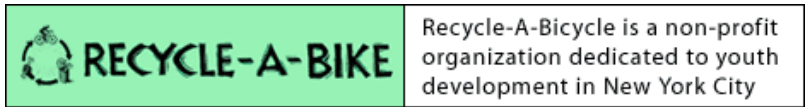
## [More on Campsites](#)



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF Fishing



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# Fighting The Fish

*Probably the best part of fishing. The fight can be exhilarating and suspenseful, not to mention tiring.*

*How do you fight a fish anyway?*

*That's what this page is about. When it comes to explaining how to fight the fish, It's been broken down into 3 areas,*

[Detecting the fish](#)

[Setting the hook](#)

[Fighting the fish](#)

## How can I tell if a fish is on my line?

An expression used by fisherman when they believe something is biting the bait is: Nibble. A nibble can be a couple of things. We call them, "mouthing" or a "nip". Mouthing or chewing the bait is when the fish holds the bait (or part of the bait) in its mouth and is decides whether or not to eat it. It's hard to describe, but when you see the rod tip deliberately moving go up and down, or maybe the line moving around, and you know something is going on but not sure what, go ahead and set the hook. This is one of those areas where you'll learn to develop "feel" over time.

A nip is when a fish takes a quick, small bite from the bait. Perch and Walleye are notorious for this. They will nip at the bait right down to the hook until your bait is gone, wait for you to put out another piece of bait and do it again. You'll notice this nipping because you'll see the rod tip do a quick little bounce or two. Don't try to set the hook on these little "taps" unless the taps are in rapid succession. If a quick succession of "taps" doesn't happen, wait for the rod tip to quickly go down a little farther than normal. Then quickly set the hook.

If the fish keeps taking your bait but you can't get a good hook set, try changing to a smaller hook

When you think you may have a nibble, make sure you're holding the rod in your hand. Don't have it leaning against anything. By doing this you'll not only be able to see the nibble but be able to feel it, this will increase your odds for a better hook set.

When fish get real aggressive, they will strike your bait. There are a couple of different strikes. They may either inhale the bait completely or do what we call a nipping strike. If the fish inhales the bait, set the hook, and the fight is on. If the fish are just hitting the tail, or you feel a strike, but the fish does not inhale the bait they are nipping at it aggressively. That means they're interested but not motivated enough to really take it. You may want to change speed (slow it down) if your casting or trolling. You could also slightly change the color of the bait or the lure.

Once you feel the fish has the bait, do not pass go, do not collect you're \$200 and whatever you do, don't panic!

*I feel a nibble now what?  
Set the hook!*

### **Setting the hook**

Setting the hook has been discussed in the previous section, but what does it really mean? It means to apply the appropriate amount of force to imbed the barb of the hook into the fish's mouth. Please whatever you do, don't set the hook like the pros do. If you set the hook too hard, you could pull that fish out of the water and send him flying into the next county! Seriously, a hookset that's too hard can damage its mouth, and you could kill it trying to get the hook out. Only use the force that's necessary.

A fisherman sets the hook by:

Either jerking the rod up vertically and back, or by jerking the rod to the side (do this only for surface bait, so you don't pull the bait into the air in your direction!)

Once the hook is set, you can fight the fish using the tips below.

### **Fighting the fish**

Below are tips to help you get the fish in the boat:

#### **Keep the line tight and the rod tip up.**

Try to keep the rod at about a 45° angle. This forces the head of the fish up and doesn't allow the lure to be spit out

#### **Keep the rod slightly bent.**

You do this to transfer the tension from the line to the rod. If this isn't done, you run the risk of breaking your line, or having the fish work its way free.

#### **Use the drag.**

Be sure to adjust the drag before you start fishing for the day. You do this by giving your line a pull. You want the drag set with about 1/2 the strength of your line. For example, if you're using 4 lb test line, use your hand to pull off the line using 2 pounds of pressure.

You don't want to have the drag let off line when you set the hook. Keep in mind; you may have to adjust the drag during the fight. The reason you want to adjust this because the fish may be heading towards a rock pile or weedbed you don't want him to go. You may have to tighten the drag up at the risk of snapping the line. On the other hand, you may have a lot of line on your reel and if you're not worried about him getting into an area you don't want him to, don't risk the fish breaking your line, lessen the drag and let him tire himself out. Be sure to check the drag periodically throughout the day.

For more information on drag see the reel page.

Do not try to crank the reel while the fish is taking off line. All you're doing is twisting the line. If you don't want him running with the line, then tighten the drag.

### **Horsing the fish-DON'T DO IT**

Horsing the fish means, your fighting him too hard. You don't want your drag set too hard. You don't want to pull on the rod too hard. The object is to keep his head up and the line taut, and let him tire himself out. Tiring him out is "fighting the fish" this is the best part of fishing!

### **Pump and Reel**

Here is a technique that can be used once you have the fish under control. Don't try this if the drag is letting the line out. Pull the rod up slowly to 12 o'clock. Then reel the rod back down to the 10 o'clock position. We can't stress this enough, as you lower the rod, keep cranking the handle. It is extremely important to keep the line tight between you and the

fish while the rod is being lowered. If you don't, you'll have slack in the line and the fish could spit the lure out. Once the rod is down (to about a 2 o'clock), slowly pull it up again and repeat the process.

### Use a Net

This may sound simple, but it's amazing how many people don't use one. You'll want to have your fishing buddy get the net in the water at the last moment after you've gotten the fish up to the boat. Putting the net in the water too early could scare him and he may start thrashing about. Get the net under the fish and scoop him up all in one motion.

*Fighting the fish is the best part. Don't rush getting your catch into the boat. Remember, you have all day to tire it out, so enjoy the experience. Just remember, keep the rod tip up, you're line taunt, don't horse him and don't panic! Fighting does take some practice, so don't get flustered if you lose a couple in the beginning.*





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## 9/0 Big Game Reel



### Description:

These are the world's most powerful star drag reels -- rugged offshore workhorses that have amassed more IGFA big game world records than all other makes combined. Penn Senator® reels have found a wide range saltwater duty -- from giant shark, tuna, marlin and swordfish to grouper, cod, tautog and rockfish. This reel features: stainless steel pinion gear with high strength bronze alloy main gear; black anodized aluminum spool; double metal ring reinforced sides plates; oversized power handle; harness lugs for fighting harness; heavy duty clicker; one piece rod clamp; and chrome plated brass exposed metal components for corrosion resistance.

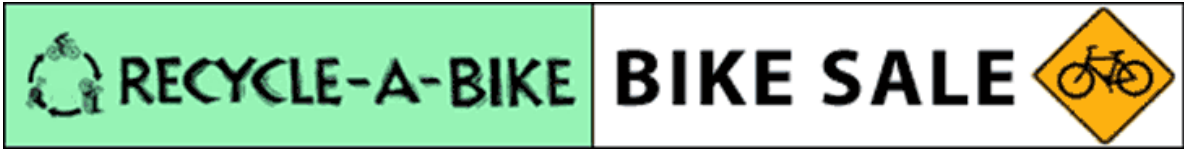
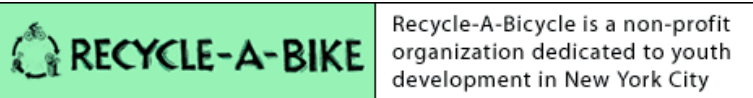


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## description of 9/0 Big Game Reel

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## There's More than One Way to Cast with the Open-Face Spinning Reel

*by Stan Fagerstrom*

Lot of fishermen who use open-faced spinning reels fail to realize there is more than one way to cast with them.

Observe carefully the next 10 anglers you see using a spinning outfit. I'd bet a generous chunk of next month's paycheck I could tell you exactly how they cast with it. They will open their bail and drape the line across their right forefinger. When they are ready to cast they simply straighten out the forefinger and the lure sails away.

There's nothing wrong with that method of casting. It's the one most manuals advocate. But it's not the only procedure useable with an open-face spinning reel.

Some readers will recognize the name Steve Rajeff. This confident casting expert has won more casting championships at the national and international level than anybody. Steve, now a key executive with G. Loomis Rods, is best known for his skills with a fly rod. He's just as good with a spinning outfit or bait casting gear.

If you ever have opportunity to watch Steve handle his open-face reel, observe carefully what he does with it. You'll see him drop his right forefinger, after he's opened the bail, to trap the line against the side of the reel's spool. He gets better control that way than he does casting in what's considered conventional fashion.



*Here's the method I recommend for getting pinpoint accuracy with the open faced spinning reel. My left forefinger traps the line against the lip of the spool. When I want the lure to fly I out I simply release the line with the left forefinger. All the time the lure is in the air the line is flowing off of the spool under my left forefinger. The result is line control similar to that a caster experiences with his thumb on a level wind revolving spool reel.*

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"I get a degree of accuracy using my open face reel this way that's very close to what I enjoy with a level wind reel," Rajeff says. "It's the procedure I always use when I'm involved in casting competition."

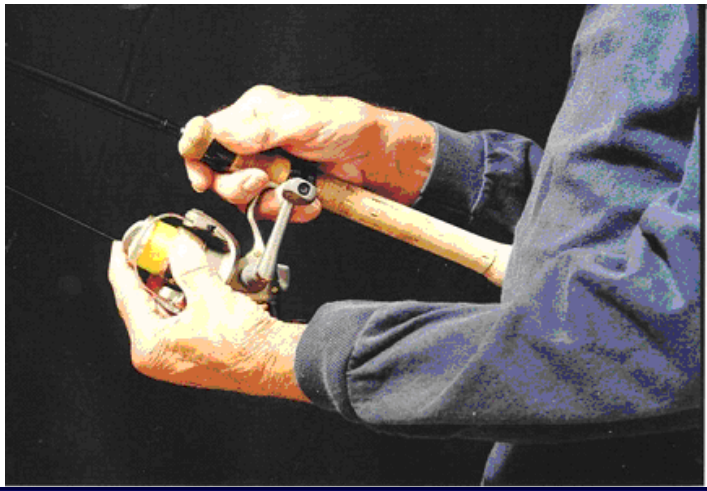
The key to any kind of casting is being able to stay in touch with your line while the lure is in flight. You've got to be able to slow the flight of the lure, but you can't do it in such a fashion the lure stops with a jerk.

If you've ever watched one of my casting demonstrations you know I utilize yet a third technique with spinning gear. I learned early on I couldn't get the kind of pinpoint accuracy required for demonstration work with a spinning outfit trying to feather my line with my right forefinger. I got reasonably good accuracy, but not consistently enough to feel comfortable when I had 500 people jammed around my casting area waiting to see if I could practice what I was preaching.

The procedure I worked out brings both hands into the act. I open the bail and trap the line against the lip of the front of the spool with my left forefinger. When I release pressure on the line with the left forefinger away goes the lure. All the time the lure is in the air the line is flowing off the spool immediately under my left forefinger. I find it a whole lot easier to feather the line with my left forefinger.

---

*Here's a view of the positioning of the left forefinger as seen from the left side of the reel.*



When I use the above procedure, I'm still casting with my right hand. All that left hand does is sort of steady things and provide that left forefinger out front to feather the line. Anyone who would like to study the technique might be interested in my newest hour-long video on casting. It details how the left forefinger is used. The charge for the video is \$19.95. It can be ordered from Stan Fagerstrom, 928 Island Drive South, Florence, OR 97439. Enclose \$3 for postage & handling.

We all know it's our thumb that controls things as line comes off the spool of a level wind reel. It's this constant thumb control that let's us achieve pinpoint accuracy with a bait casting outfit. The effect I get using the open-face spinning reel in the fashion I've outlined is much the same. The left forefinger does the same job on the line that my thumb does with my level winders.

Depending on how the spinning reel is constructed, it's sometimes difficult to slip your left forefinger under the bail wire to trap the line against the spool. This is particularly true of older reels. For years I got around that problem by simply removing the bail wire. I left the line roller in place, but removed the bail wire completely. I used my right forefinger to get the line back on the spool when I began the retrieve. With a bit of practice it wasn't all that difficult.

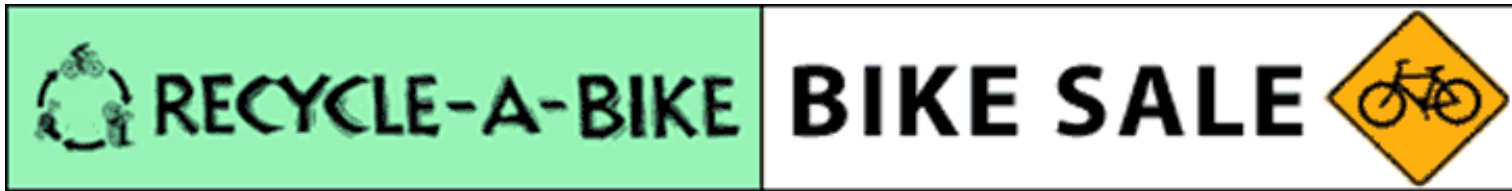
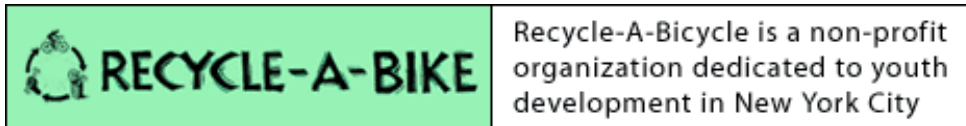
Since I switched to Shimano reels, removal of the bail wire is no longer necessary. You can use my left forefinger technique with these excellent reels without messing with the bail wire. One of the Shimano reels I use for casting demonstrations and lots of my fishing is the Symetre. I've been using the Model SY-1000FH. This dandy little reel is a pleasure to use in the fashion I've detailed.

It really doesn't matter how I cast or how Steve Rajeff casts. The only thing that does matter is how much accuracy, enjoyment and satisfaction you are deriving from the method you're using for your own fishing. Nowhere is it written-in-stone that you have to cast as I do or that you have to follow the instructions printed in someone's manual.

Chances are the guy---or gal---who wrote that manual for your spinning reel hasn't spent half the time fishing you have. But I say again what I said in the beginning: How are you going to know if what you're doing really provides the most accuracy and enjoyment unless you give the other methods a try?

It's fun to practice with your spinning reels. It doesn't cost a dime and there are no rules involved. Controlling a spinning reel line with my left forefinger works for me. I've proven that in casting demonstrations around a sizeable chunk of the world over the past half-century. With a little practice the chances are great you can do the same.





## **How To Cut Your Fish**

---

After the catching, or even the buying, there are a few steps between the lake and your plate. While not for the eternally queasy, cleaning a fish is not as messy as one might think. And don't worry about the guts. It's part of the full fishy experience. Cover your work area with plenty of newspaper or heavy paper bags. Have a plastic bag handy for the guts, bones, etc. Make sure to seal them well before disposing.

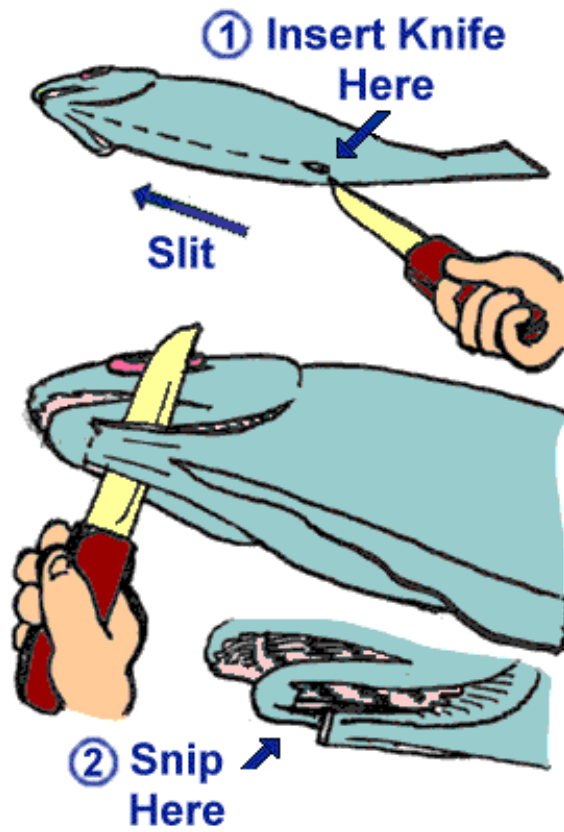
### **Step 1: Prepare the body**

First, wash the fish in cool running water to remove any slime. With a sharp knife, cut off the pectoral fins on both sides of the fish. Not all fish need scaling. If you're not sure, run the blade of the blunt knife at almost a 90 degree angle to the body from tail end to head. If the scales are thick and come up easily, you need to remove them. Continue until the body is smooth.

### **Step 2: Gut the fish**

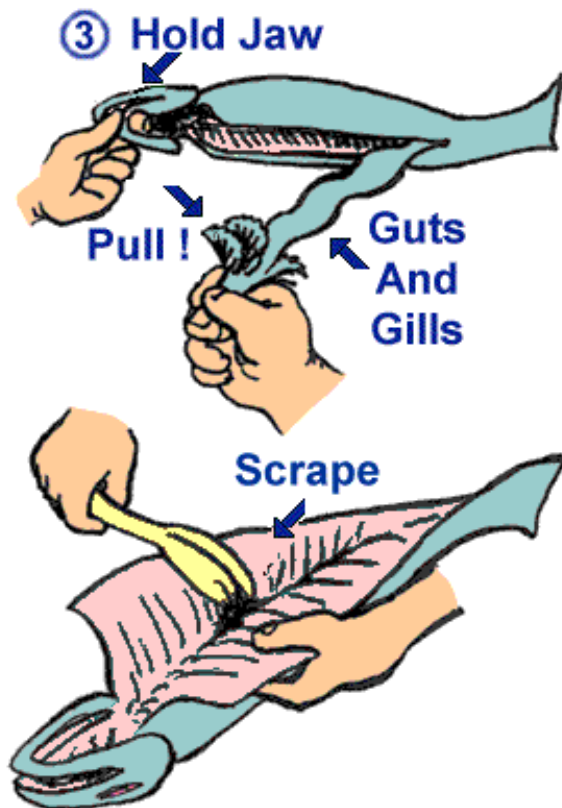
Using the sharp knife, drive the blade point into the vent (small anal opening near the tail, where the body begins to widen). Cut right through the belly all the way to the gills. Remove the guts from the cavity. With the spoon, scoop out the dark reddish-brown kidney line that lies along the backbone.

**Important:**  
**Cut out all parts of the gills.**



### Step 3: Remove Head and Tail

Cut the head off right below the gills. Cut the tail where it joins the body.



### Step 4: Remove Dorsal Fin and Bones

Cut along the length of each side of the dorsal fin (top) of the fish. Remove the dorsal fin and connected bones by giving a quick pull from tail end to head. This step is not essential, but eliminates those tiny, annoying bones that can ruin a meal.

**Don't Forget**



**The Dorsal Fin**

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### The Easiest Tips Yet for Improving Your Fly Cast By Doug Macnair

Over the last decade, I've frequently received questions dealing with the fly cast, usually from folks new to the sport who find making a decent cast difficult at best. However, a surprising number have stemmed from long-time fly fishers who, having never mastered the cast, simply made do...

Believing that folks called to the gentle art should be able to fly cast, I sat down and wrote a manuscript on fly casting. After extensive research into what the experts offer, I found, what I believed to be, areas where descriptions of "how to do it" could be clarified or said another way.

[\(complete story\)](#)

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#### Spinnerbait Presentations by Roger Lee Brown

Through all the years of teaching students bass fishing skills and techniques, as well as many former guide clients I have taken on bass fishing trips, one question comes to mind that has been asked time and time again and that question is; "Are spinnerbaits really worth the money you pay for them?," and I have to say YES!.... If I had a choice of 3 baits to fish a body of water for Largemouth, Smallmouth, or Kentucky Spots I would definitely have to say that a Spinnerbait is one of the 3 baits that I would choose. Spinnerbaits are one of the most versatile type of baits that an angler can use when fishing for bass. There are several different presentations and techniques that one can use when fishing with a spinnerbait, such as [\(complete story\)](#)



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#### Wooden Plugs for Spotted Sea Trout and Red Drum By Luhr Jensen

Spotted sea trout and red drum inhabit all of the coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico. They range from the Florida Everglades and the Texas bays to the Third Pass of Mexico. Following are some techniques and suggestions to help you catch these sensational game fish.



Grass-covered shorelines and shallow sand flats are the primary feeding and spawning grounds for reds and trout. They can be found in these areas when the water temperature rises above 70 degrees, as they come to feed and to leave their eggs in the safety of the sea grass. [\(complete story\)](#)

---

#### Italian Bass by Massimo Zanetti

The sun is just breaking the darkness when the big surface plug hits the water near one of the thousands of trees in the river. After twenty seconds, the time to let the ripples disappear, I twitch slightly the Zara Spook then let it sit. Another twitch and the "walkin' the dog" retrieve begins. A little pause between two limbs of the tree: WHAM! A big bass tries to kill the intruder. The hook set is almost immediate, just time enough to let the fish take the lure in her mouth. After a hard fight the bass is in the boat. Time for a nice picture, then she slips back in the water and returns to her tree. [\(complete story\)](#)

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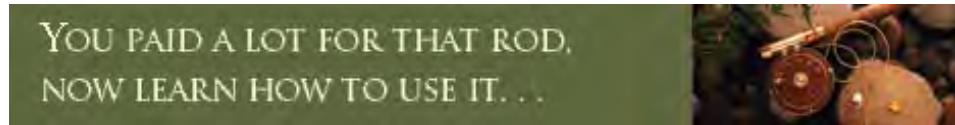
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As everyone has noticed for the past several weeks, old man winter has been gone on vacation, or something. We have been enjoying spring - like weather during what should be the onset of our cold weather season. In fact, it has been so nice outdoors, I have not considered deer hunting or duck hunting, two of my favorite cold weather endeavors. Instead, I have been focusing on my fishing, which has been pretty good. It looks like things are about to change. ([complete story](#))



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*An activity in which people live temporarily in the outdoors.*

Never camped before?

You don't really know [where to get started?](#)

Family camping or for those first time campers, just getting ready to spend time enjoying the call of the wild can be an intimidating prospect.

However, with just a little planning your first time out - and subsequent trips - camping can be a joy.

Not to worry with technical matters!

You won't in actual fact need to invest in a four-season ultra light tent, a sleeping bag rated to 50 below zero, and a stove so light that you don't even know that it's in your pack.

Let's deal with the basics and how to enjoy just one or two nights away from your home.

In the process, we'll cover the things you'll need to take along and how to use them, some ideas for meals and activities, and even a few do's and don'ts.

Hopefully this site will help with all your questions and introduce you to a new adventure in inexpensive vacationing.

*Some of the best pointers towards Camping you will find, comes from observing other Campers camping around you.*

Did you know that there are [campgrounds](#) near almost every major attraction in the United States?

**Why pay those outrageous hotel bills when you can camp inexpensively and give your family an adventure at the same time?**

**However, the benefits of camping with your family go further than affordability.**

**In today's world, it is difficult to find a large block of time to really focus on your family, your partner, and your children.**

**Even when we set aside a weekend, telephone calls, errands, and household chores intrude.**

When you are camping you will know what true togetherness is as a family. There are no phones, televisions,

or

appointments to be rushing off to.

Since you are sleeping outdoors, the sun wakes you up early and you can start a nice [campfire](#) first thing in the morning where everyone will gather together for breakfast.

You will be spending most of your time outdoors, enjoying the beauty of nature and the fresh air and there is plenty of time for just plain talking to each other.

It is a great opportunity to get back in touch with nature and each other and is also one of the most inexpensive vacations your family will enjoy and remember for a long time.

Camping and excursions into the wilderness offer enlightenment that only comes from engrossing into the outdoor environment and letting go of ALL thoughts of the city.

Just relax and pay attention to your senses and a whole new world opens up before you.

Where do forest rangers go to "get away from it all?"  
-- George Carlin

Today people move at the speed of light, and most do not have the time to stop and look at the beauty that encompasses the miles of concrete in which they live.

There is nothing more glorious than watching the sun rise over a wooded lake, and nothing cleanses the soul like a breath of fresh air in the forest.

Duties at work or home seem to diffuse with the musty scent of the earth and the clean refreshing smell of a lakefront.

And if you have the means to take your kids, by all means, do so! You can then show them that there is more to life than T.V., Playstations and Gameboys or what their friends tell them.



**The best advice for any parent would be to start kids camping as soon as possible.**

**There is no substitute for family camping trips. Some are downright fun; others do a better job of building patience.**

**Experiences are the part of memories.**

**If the child is given the opportunity to share the richness of such endeavors,**

**it will forever change them for the better.**

Camping with children can be one of the greatest experiences you can have if you plan the trip properly.

One of the most exciting things about camping with children is seeing things through their eyes.

Camping with children can be a great way to introduce young ones to the wonders of nature.

By camping with children when they are young, you will set them on the path to a lifetime of camping adventures.

The outdoors is a great natural classroom. It offers unlimited opportunities for learning about every facet of life.

Outdoor activities contribute immensely to the mental and physical well being of children.

Exercise is invigorating and exposure to nature is relaxing. For you, the outdoors is an escape from the stresses of everyday life; for your kids, it's just plain fun.

Be sure to take a camera and lots of film on all of your trips. Shoot plenty of photos.

Some of the best times are spent looking at photos and recalling that sudden thunderstorm where you played "Go Fish" for three hours in a pup tent, or the time a child caught *their first fish!*

The memories of good times spent together in the beauty of the outdoors will be kept and cherished for a lifetime.

*Camping with children isn't just a good way to learn about nature together.*

*It's a wonderful way to learn about each other.*

[More Tips](#)



[Camping with Kids](#)

Camping provides an opportunity to experience nature firsthand. Campers participate in [fishing](#), swimming, canoeing, boating and tubing, plant study, bird and wildlife watching, nature photography, much - much more!.

**Just as importantly, camping helps people escape the stress of city life.**

# Take a break from the normal rhythm of life . . . kick back on a camping trip.

*Just Go!*

The best time to start enjoying the outdoors is right now.

Throughout this site you may come across these icons:



This Icon will indicate that the information following pertains to Backcountry Camping.  
*(Extreme camping, in the back woods, no modern facilities, etc.)*



This Icon will indicate that the information following pertains to Pay Campground Camping.  
*(modern facilities, etc.)*

This site is geared mainly towards Family Camping in Pay Campground Sites, therefore, if there is NO ICON besides the information you are reading then it pertains to Pay Campground Camping

Campgrounds for \$10.00 a day... EVERYDAY!...



Hopefully, you will find everything you need to get you started in the right direction in this site!

[Free Camping](#)

*The best way to get started with this site is to*  
[Click Here!](#)



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

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You can browse through this page and click to a topic which interests you  
or  
you can simply go page by page like a book



by following the icons at the bottom of each page.

You can also click on an item located in the column to your left.

This icon will take you back to the page that follows in sequence of this site  
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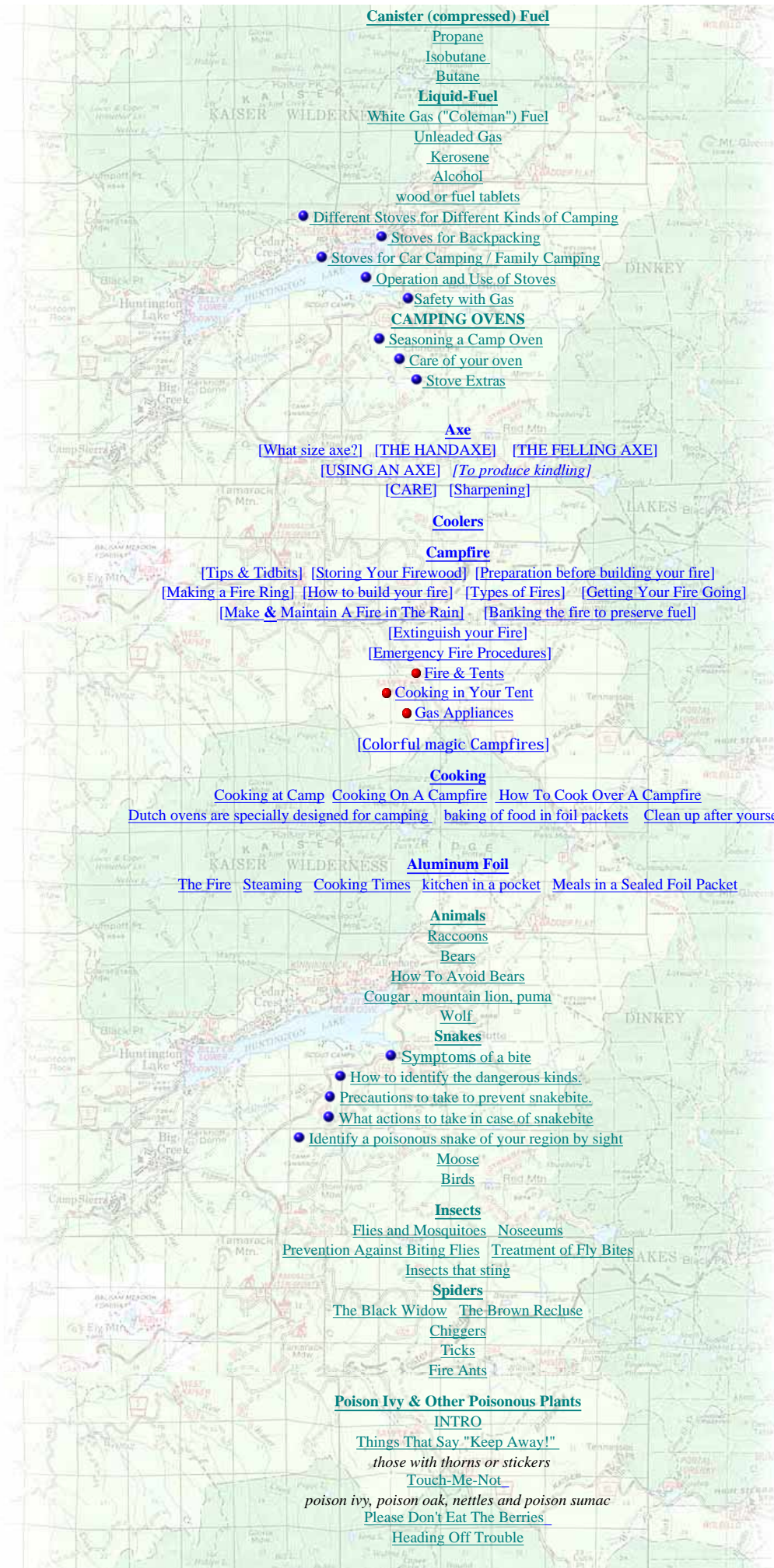
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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Novice Camper

The fundamentals of camping are simple:  
know where you are going,  
wear proper clothing, bring adequate food, have a comfortable shelter,  
and make it a memorable experience.

First, keep it simple to start out.  
Camp close to home, within 1-3 hours drive.

If you've never been camping, don't worry.  
It's far easier than you might think.

Extreme backpacking gear is not necessary.  
An inexpensive tent, sleeping bag and small assortment of cooking utensils will suffice for an overnight stay under the stars.  
Simply distancing yourself from the everyday tribulations of life will become addicting.

Today, you can buy RV's, pop-up trailers and fancy four room tents for your adventure in the great outdoors. It's all a matter of comfort and what you can afford. If you aren't a regular camper and don't yet own any equipment, it is best to start out with a tent which is just big enough to fit your family.

**You can purchase a family sized tent for less than one-hundred dollars,**

**or**

**two nights in a hotel room!**

Other basic equipment you will need for camping is, sleeping bags, a good quality gas lantern, cook stove, first-aid kit, cooler for food and some good out-doors clothing which is suited to the weather you will be camping in.

[Click Here](#)

**for some other pieces of equipment that you'll want to include**

# Setup and try all your gear at home before heading to the campsite.

Trust me!

It is better to know how to set up your gear before hand rather than trying to figure it all out at the campsite.

Maybe even set up the tent in the back yard and let the kids try it out over night.

Before heading out on your first camping trip with a child, let them take naps or spend the night in your tent at home. The claustrophobic environment takes some getting used to, and it's best for both you and the child to accustom yourselves to a tent at home rather than the outdoors where it is darker and you might bother other campers.

Involve the kids, delegate tasks and have them share in the camp chores: setting up camp, cooking, cleaning, gathering trash, and packing for the return trip, etc.

Allow plenty of extra time for everything - packing gear, getting up in the morning, cooking, setting up the tent, and hiking.

Enjoy the leisure time and avoid rushing to get things done.

## Prepare properly

### 1. Practice tent pitching at night

Before leaving make sure you can set up your tent in the dark.  
The unexpected can happen.  
You might run into a 96 mile detour  
and arrive at your campsite much later than planned.

*The sun sets three-and-a-half times faster than normal when you're trying to set up camp.*



### 2. Bring food supplies

The [fish](#) Dad (or Mom) catch,  
if any,  
may not be enough to feed the troop.

Learn how to make your own campfire coffee;  
Seven-Elevens don't grow in the "wilderness."

Bring snacks for the kids  
it makes life on the road much easier.

### 3. Prepare for [bugs](#) and [other critters](#)

Pack your bug repellent(s).



## [Plan for critter resistant food storage.](#)

### 4. Remember your pets

Speaking of critters, make arrangements for your pets' care.  
Some pets don't travel well.

If you are thinking about taking your dog camping,  
the outdoors is one of the best places to spend time with your dog.  
The dog loves all the new sights, sounds and smells.



[Click Here for a few tips that may make camping with your dog a bit more enjoyable and possibly safer.](#)

*Gold fish are not advisable on a camping trip.*

### 5. [Make a packing list](#)

Start making your list of things to bring at least one week before  
departure. Check off your list as you load the car.  
It is usually the little necessities that get left behind  
*like the flashlight*

We camp several times every summer and have found that organization is the key to not forgetting any important items. We use several Rubbermaid tubs with lids that we keep fully stocked with our camping gear year-round.

One tub contains a dishwashing bucket, dish soap, dishcloths and towels, flashlight, spare batteries, a deck of cards, bug spray, aluminum foil, garbage bags, rope, string, first aid kit, propane and a lighter.

Another tub contains pots and pans, all cooking and eating utensils, plates and bowls, tablecloth, drink huggies, and a couple old measuring cups.

It really pays to keep your tubs fully stocked and ready for any trip.

We bought cheap flatware and cooking utensils for our tub so we don't have to bring any from home  
or  
cause unnecessary garbage for landfills by using plastic.

We also keep a [checklist](#) on our computer of all the gear we need (tent, tarp, sleeping bag, grill, charcoal, etc.) that we print out prior to each trip.

All we have to do when packing is grab our tubs, pack the cooler and dry food, use the checklist for other gear and we're ready to go.

### 6. OK, now where to go!

Do you and the kids like the water?

[How about fishing?](#)

[Need Fishing Tips?](#)

**FUNDAMENTALS  
OF  
FISHING**

It is helpful to know your destination in advance.  
Also, keep in mind that some campgrounds require a reservation.

Even though it is mentioned last here,

do this first before going out on any outing.

### **Plan!**

Get as much information on your different choices of campgrounds as you can before making your choice. Ask yourself questions that will be important to making your experience a good one - is it important to have showers or am I only going to be out one night? Do they have activities for us to take part in? Are their hiking trails nearby? Are their bathroom facilities with running water or only port a potties? Do I need to carry in my own water or take a filter or do they have water facilities? Do they have grills and fire rings on site? Does the campsite have tent pads? Can you reserve a campsite or do you take "potluck" when you arrive? What is the cost? Is there a camp store? The answers to these questions will help you be better prepared to deal with decisions that will have to be made on the fly at the campsite.

## [Planning On Holiday Camping?](#)

### [Know where you are going](#)



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### Before You Go

If you are going somewhere you haven't visited before, find out about facilities, how the site owner feels about fire pits, whether or not [firewood](#) will be available, [if dogs are allowed](#), supermarkets in the local area, and so on.

### In Search of the Perfect Campsite

You're planning a big vacation and want to camp, how can you [find that perfect place](#)? You're looking for some variety in your "local" weekend getaways, but which [campgrounds](#) is your style? You could try them out one by one for sure but you know some will feel wrong from the moment you check in, why risk a weekend if you can avoid it.

These are issues we've all faced at one time or another.

If possible visit the campground first.

We have done this by taking a day trip to the next state or sometimes on our way home from a camping weekend. We will pull in and go to the office and tell them we are interested in staying with them in the future. They have always been very hospitable; if they do not offer a map of the campground ask for one.

As we walk the grounds here are some of the things we check for:

- Restrooms and showers, cleanliness, condition and hours of operation. Some have hot water only at certain hours! I can live with metered showers as long we aren't paying "resort" prices, but it's a good thing to know.
- Recreation facilities
- Is it a family crowd, or is it overrun with retired seasonals? *No offense intended here, we are just more comfortable in a*

*family camping setting.*

- 📌 Earmark some favorite sites and make general notes.
- 📌 Are you near Railroads, highways or other 24 hour sources of noise. (*avoid these like the plague*)
- 📌 Is the staff courteous?
- 📌 Gauge the reaction of the children if applicable.

This is really a very valuable way of screening places.

Usually it only takes about half an hour to check a place out and it's a great way to break up the ride home on a Sunday afternoon.

Do remember that when doing this you are guests and all should be on their best behavior.

We always do this on foot to get the best perspective and to be the least disruptive.

One source you do not want to overlook is roadside rest areas. Most states operate rest / information stations where you can browse from a plethora of brochures. They generally have material on specific destinations as well as regional publications detailing things to do while visiting. These facilities are usually found in strategic locations such as near state borders.

Of course sometimes this won't be practical and you have to do your fact finding long distance. There will be times when you may be traveling to places that simply are not camping Mecca's. This calls for research. If you belong to AAA call or drop by and get the guide books for the states you are visiting. They also used to have separate camping books for each region. They may have been merging those into the regular travel guides. Either way, make sure you get campground info from them. If you want, spring for one of the big camping books like "Woodall's".

[Woodall's has an online directory](#)

you can use for free, it's not the same as thumbing through that big book but if you know what you're looking for you can save \$20.00 and a tree! Another great way to get info is to contact the states tourism department; you can usually do this right on the web [via state websites](#) and e-mail. Make sure they know where you are heading and you need info on camping attractions.

When you get all this material together lay it out on the kitchen table and start sorting.

First decide what you want to do, then look for accommodations.

Remember you will be breaking and making camp. Once you have a rough idea where your nights will be spent start sorting through the campground options based on your own criteria. Things you may find important include, [fishing](#), open water [swimming](#), swimming pool, hookups, handicapped accessibility, playgrounds, theme weeks or weekends, and so on.

Now you should have an itinerary and a number of options as to where to camp. Get on the phone and request brochures, rate cards and any other material that will help you make your decision. Don't be bashful about this, you are offering to put bread on their table and they are glad to hear

about your interest. They like to know how you learned about them so have that fact handy. Also ask about any attractions that you may be considering. You may find that a place you were going to visit burned to the ground 3 weeks ago . . .  
back to the drawing board.

The campground hosts can be fantastic help in planning local trip details.

Keep in mind that you are probably not going to be spending all your days in campgrounds; you'll have places to go and things to do. I try to home in on places where I can be comfortable for the evening and get a good night's sleep.

As much as I like open water, a quick dip in the pool with the kids is often all we have time for on a trip like this. If this is your only vacation you may choose a more leisurely pace. Our feeling is that we have traveled a good distance and we want to invest out time seeing and experiencing new things.

### **Prepare meals**

It's a good idea to pack the night before as it always seems to take longer if you leave it until the day you depart for the camp. You get stressed because you're late leaving, the children get stressed because they're bored having to wait, and then you all have to sit together with that negative energy bouncing around the car.

If you should happen to live where you don't feel that your items will be safe overnight in/on your vehicle,

At least have it all ready to go the night before.

If you get everything ready beforehand, all you'll have to do is get up, have breakfast, throw the equipment in the car and go.

### ***Tips***

- buy block ice, instead of cubes, it lasts a lot longer
- make one large cube at home (old milk container or plastic container)
- purchase propane on sale & bring extras, average 1 canister per day
- pre-chop veggies at home (night before trip) & store them in zip lock bags
- grate cheese ahead of time or buy pre-grated packages
- pre-cook any sauces & meat mixes, but don't try this with pasta noodles
- make stove top casaroles & freeze in containers; thaw & re-heat at campsite
- buy paper plates & cups (not plastic) that can be burned in campfire
- get Pringles canned potato chips - so the bag won't get crushed
- pack your bread in a box - so it won't get smooched
- prepackaged bag 'o salad is a great way to get your fresh leafy greens
- buy pancake batter that mixes with water only. (no eggs or milk needed)
- only stock beverages in cooler that will be consumed on the first day
- wrap corn on cob in heavy foil 4+ times for cooking on fire & rotate often

For family campers, car campers, and RVers taking condiments along is easy. Just throw them in a cooler or refrigerator, and take them out as you need them. For backpackers and other campers that are more restricted as to the weight and size of the items they carry, Read On...

Simply take a trip to all of your local fast food restaurants before your next trip.

Nearly all of them have individually packaged condiments that are perfect for backpacking. They are small, lightweight, and they last a lot longer without

refrigeration! And best of all, they are free! What more could you ask for? Here are some of my favorites:

Ketchup  
Mustard  
Mayonnaise packets (be sure to keep them cool at least)  
relish  
salt and pepper (Wendy's offers these in handy "pop-open" packets)  
Sugar or Sugar Substitute  
Mild, Hot, or Fire Sauce (from Taco Bell)  
Sour Cream Packets (like the mayo, these are best when taken on cold weather trips)  
Soy Sauce and Sweet & Sour packets (from most Chinese restaurants)  
Salad Dressing (best kept cool or cold)  
Jams, Jellies, Butter Spreads  
Tabasco sauce in the little pouches (Found at Chick-Fil-A)

### Go over your [checklist](#).

Don't forget to tell someone you trust of your plans.

*Give details of where you are going and when you expect to return, give directions and possible alternative roads that you may take, provide cell phone numbers, vehicle description and license plate numbers, hand-held radio channel and codes that you will use, and provide local authority phone numbers (State Police, Game & Fish Commission, Sheriff Dept., etc.) for the county or area that you will be in.*

Try to find someone to collect your mail, check on your house, feed and water animals, etc.

### Vehicle Readiness



Check your vehicle before leaving home to be sure it is ready for the trip.

Then check it again and often while enroute and at the campsite upon arrival for any possible damage. Some things are easily and inexpensively fixed if caught early.



(e.g. If you notice a tire is losing air, a quick trip to the nearest service station to get a patch is a lot less trouble



than having a flat when you are miles from nowhere.)



## Packing & organizing camping gear

The basic principle is to organize or categorize your gear items by "when" and "how quickly" you'll need them.

**Arrival stuff:** when you arrive at a campsite, the first thing you may want is your raingear, the [tarp](#) and its [guylines](#), [stakes](#), and mallet. If they are kept handy, you only need the doors or the trunk open for an instant to get them.

With the tarp up and the car backed in under it, you can rummage without either you, the car trunk, or the gear getting soaked in the event it's raining.

**Raingear:** keep everyone's raingear together in one breathable (mesh) bag that's accessible from inside the car.

**Night stuff:** you don't need "night stuff" until the night, so keep it all in one bag or box *night attire, flashlight, [sleeping bag](#), [sleeping pads](#), wash kit, etc.* If that bag or box is well buried under other items in the car that's fine - you'll have unloaded the other stuff by the time you need it anyway.

**[Tent](#) and [fly](#):** keep them separate from other gear.

**Spare clothes:** changes of clothing are not needed every day or during the day - you can bury them too.

**Miscellaneous daytime needs:** items you might need any time of any day (*extra sweaters, a windbreaker, swimwear, towel, a sunhat, sunglasses, personal medication, water bottle, bug repellent, and odds and ends*). Pack in a "daybag" for each person, perhaps even a daypack.

**Kitchen stuff:** cutlery, plates, mugs and pots should all be together in a plastic storage box or something weather and water proof, along with the standard items you need at every meal - dishcloth and soap, tea, coffee, condiments, etc.

**[Stove stuff](#):** stove, white gas, lighter, etc., need to be kept separate from food.

## WIND DOWN

Try to leave enough time to wind down



with a cup of coffee (or whatever you fancy)  
before you are due to leave,  
it can take a lot of energy to pack a car, so give yourself a chance to  
breathe before you have to drive.

Need to fill up the tank?



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You can simply send this E-mail with nothing to write and I will be alerted with the Page that has a broken link.  
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Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



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BIKE SALE



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### When You Arrive

A loaded mini van pulled in to the only remaining campsite.

Four children leaped from the vehicle and began feverishly unloading gear and setting up the tent. The boys rushed to gather firewood, while the girls and their Mother set up the camp stove and cooking utensils.

A nearby camper marveled at the youngsters. He then told the Father, "That, sir, is some display of teamwork."

The father replied, "I have a system; no one goes to the bathroom until the camp is set up."



### When You Arrive . . .

#### The number one rule of campsites

is to select your campsite before dark.

No end of trouble can be avoided by this one simple rule.

Just about every seasoned camper will admit to finding themselves, at one time or another, so tired, pressed for daylight or challenged by incoming or inclement weather, that they simply pulled their tent from its bag and put it up as quickly as possible-wherever they could.

Those veterans will further admit that they probably didn't sleep as well that night as they could have if they'd have taken just a few more minutes to get settled.

They'll also say this practice is irresponsible.

Campsite selection goes beyond simply finding a place that is aesthetically pleasing to spend the night or a few days. What you look for in a site affects comfort, safety, the environment, wildlife and other campers.

### *No Matter Where You're Camping*

Whether you're in the wilds, miles from civilization, at a wilderness area campsite or at an improved campground, there are a number of campsite

selection criteria to consider.

Walk or drive around the site before you decide where to pitch your camp.

Do you want to be near children the same age as yours so they can play together?

Do you want to be away from the action to give yourself some peace and quiet,

or

perhaps to allow your older children some more independence?

Do you need to be near to the facilities in case someone has to get up to the toilet during the night?

And so on . . .

FIRST of ALL,

***Level the playing field.***

I recommend that you select a site as level as possible.

As you walk around the site, watch for long grooves channeled into the ground as this may be a sign that the ground needs some help with drainage

-

select a site on higher ground.

A level site is also critical -  
if you want to sleep well.

If you are forced to set up on a slight slope, don't sleep laterally on the slope or you'll wake with lots of sore muscles that worked all night to keep you in place-whether or not you wanted them to work. Sleep with your head above your feet or vice versa-whichever makes you most comfortable.

***Conduct a surface check***

Clear any loose debris, such as newly cut grass, stones or fallen twigs, away before you pitch your tent.

After the tent is set up, and before you've loaded it up with gear, get inside and check for sticks or rocks that may cause sleeping discomfort.

Small rocks or twigs can be easily removed.

Larger obstacles may require you to relocate.

If you have a tent with a sleeping annex, pitch it so that the annex points in a westward direction, towards the setting sun. Zip up the annex at least two hours before you lose the warmth of the sun each day, and you will find that the annex will keep warmer for longer.

On summer mornings, you will also be able to spend extra time in bed, unlike any of your neighbors who started to get hot and sweaty as the rising sun warmed their sleeping annex!

***Look skyward***

Pay attention to what's overhead.

Dead trees/limbs or the potential for falling rock can create dangerous situations. Without the protection of a tent, even objects such as large pinecones can pack a wallop.

***Respect your fellow campers***

Being mindful of others is simple etiquette. Set up in an area and in a way that does not encroach on other campsites or campers' privacy. Respect "quit time," usually after 9 p.m.

When using a public campground, a tuba placed on your picnic table will keep the campsites on either side vacant.



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Basic Equipment

*If you need to shop for gear, go to Wal-Mart!  
They have all your basics at good prices.*

*When My Wife & I started camping we didn't have much more than a tent, sleeping bags and an old hurricane lamp.  
As far as equipment goes, it would depend on what level of comfort you want.*

*It also depends on how often you will be camping,  
to see if it is worth buying all that I am going to mention.*

*Accept the idea that for your first trips you will be under-equipped.  
Consider them learning trips.*

*Bring a notebook to write down all the things you forgot or wish you had thought of.*

*Even after 10 years of camping we still do this.*

#### Tent(s)

- Many families have their school age children sleep in separate tents. (Our 3 older boys each have their own dome tent.)
- Buy at least a "couple people bigger" than your family size.
- Regarding size, you will want to keep in mind where you will be camping. Not all campsites are created equal. Your tent size may require a bigger campsite!
- If buying a tent with an attached screen house, keep in mind that attached screen houses with a built in floor; when it rains, this floored-screen house holds water like a swimming pool!
- Dome or cabin - it's really a personal preference.

**How to Pick 'em**

**How to Care for them**

**How to Use them**

**Tent poles**

[Detailed info about Tent Poles](#)

## **Tent stakes**

- Many tents come with the inexpensive easily bendable aluminum kind. Be sure to invest in some of the [plastic yellow](#) or [orange ones](#). You will have much better luck anchoring the tarp that covers your tent to these stakes than the aluminum ones.



## **ground cloth**

Extend the life of your tent with the added protection of a ground cloth (ground cover, tarp, tent footprint). Consider using a ground cloth with your tent. This footprint tarp protects against abrasion and acts as an added barrier to help keep moisture out of the tent and make it more comfortable for those inside.

*You can use painters tarps  
(these are thin clear plastic, and you basically get one use out of them)  
and the rolls of plastic sheeting that contractors use  
(You can get them at Wal Mart for about \$5 per roll.)*

*As a ground cloth it can be used a couple of times until holes start to develop in it, then just throw it away, and make a new one.*

*They are also great to cover your fire wood.*

*See Tarps below*

## **Tarp(s)**

- can be used to cover the ground under your tent prolonging the life of your tent (just make sure the tarp you use under your tent is slightly smaller than the floor of your tent)
- can be used over your tent to protect it from bird droppings, sparks, tree branches, extra rain protection, and the sun.

If using the tarp over your tent, try to get it bigger than your tent to have an overhang by your tent door. It is wonderful not to have to step out of your tent immediately into the rain. This keeps the inside of your tent drier! Some people have been known to buy an inexpensive dining canopy just for the poles to use for the tarp over their tent.

- wood cover

## **SLEEPING GEAR**

- sleeping bags



- Pillows and pillowcases
- Some kind of sleeping mat/pad



*blue foam closed cell type (Less expensive)  
self-inflating mattresses  
You may find a cot a nice little extra.*

- sheets

*can feel better to lay on in humid weather than a hot sleeping bag*

• Wool blankets

*nothing beats a wool blanket as an insulator on cool/cold nights.*

### **Stove**



Campfires don't make very practical stoves or ovens. Sure, some foods taste good and are fun to cook over the campfire, but without appropriate utensils and a proper fire, the food will not cook correctly and you'll likely wind up with blackened cookware.

See [Stoves](#)

### **Cookware**



[See Cookware](#)

### **Lantern(s)**



[Click Here  
for More on  
Lighting and Illumination](#)

### **Small hatchet**

[Tell Me More!](#)

### **Stake hammering mallet**

rubber mallet with a hook on the other end for pulling up stakes

### **Small broom to sweep out your tent**

### **Small rug for outside your tent door**

*This is important because it really cuts down on the dirt that would otherwise end up in your tent!*

### **Clothes line and clothes pins**

## **Lamp box**

If you camp or plan to camp more than once a year, a camp box is the best thing you will ever invest in. The idea behind the camp box is to place the most common and essential stuff in one pre-packed place. A camp box can be anything you choose. I have seen everything from plastic tubs to lockable toolboxes used effectively for stowing your most crucial camp gear.

The trick is to pack as much as you can without creating a box that weighs more than you can move. If the box becomes overly large, don't worry. Over time you'll figure out what you need to leave at home and what to include. But when it comes time to pack, the most common gear is already boxed up and ready to go.

*Of course, a list ensures you'll never forget anything - if that's possible.*

*Making a list is probably the hardest thing to do. Most people forget and some don't bother to take the time it requires. But once the list is complete, you'll have serious peace of mind. To develop a good list you have to start with a base of things you normally bring. Then each time you go camping bring along the list and update it. Removing things that go unused, but adding stuff you forgot.*

*Eventually the list will contain absolutely everything you want to bring.*

[Click Here for an Idea Camping List](#)

## **Cooler**



*We take three. All different colors. Then you'll know which one is the "beverage" cooler, which one is the "food" cooler and which one is for "condiments" (eggs, cheese, mustard, ketchup, etc).*

A metal cooler would be heavier, but in the long run you won't need as much ice.

[More On  
COOLERS](#)

## **Ice**

We buy the loose cubed kind, because I think it is easier to fit the food in the cooler. Many people love the big block of ice.

You decide what will be right for your needs.



## **Five gallon water container**

One with a spicket for drinking is nice.  
A square shaped one will pack easier in your car than a round one.

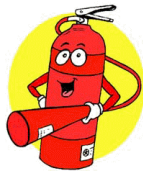


The more the better!  
One for drinking, one for cooking, one for hands and dishes and messes and one for Kool Aid (or such) for kids and ME!

For families with young children, this next item falls in the "Basic equipment" category, in our opinion.

It takes a tremendous amount of stress off of the weekend;  
however parental supervision is still required.

## A Baby Gate to go around the fire pit



### Fire extinguisher!

All vehicles and boats should have one. Not a bad idea to have one just for camping.

## NICE TO HAVE ALONG THINGS



Folding step ladder

*good for some height when tying tarps to the trees*



Rake



Kott grill (grate)

*Don't count on having a dependable grate over your fire pit. If your fire pit has a grate it may be small or bent up. The Kott grill is actually just a flat grate that takes up less car space than even a small kettle style grill.*



Maul

*This comes in very handy for splitting the big chunks of wood many Campground firewood vendors sell.*



Various length bungee cords

*(You can never have too many of these!)*



Bungee loops



Guy line adapters

*These are like short little bungees with only one hook. These are used in conjunction with the ropes you use on your tarps.*

*A great advantage to using these to attach your tarp to the stakes is that in a wind you are less likely to pop the grommets from your tarp. The bungees provide your tarp with more "give" in stressful situations than just a rope does.*




Dining canopy or screen house

TIP: Buy enough plastic drop cloths in the paint department of Wal Mart/K Mart to go around the sides you want covered of your screen house. Clothespin them to the seam where the screen meets



the ceiling. This also keeps you warmer when it's chilly in the fall/spring. A bit of an inconvenience, but hey, it works!

 Lawn chairs

 Citronella candles

*If you're camping in mosquito territory, you may want to bring some.*

 [Hammock](#)

 [Dutch oven](#)

 UTILITY BOX

*An Army ammo type box is great*

- Duct tape
- spare batteries of whatever size you use
  - spare mantles
- funnel for filling Coleman fuel lanterns
  - multipliers
- Swiss Army knife
  - compass
- adjustable wrench
  - pliers
- nylon repair tape
- spare lantern generator
  - camping scissors
  - extra rope
- liquid puncture preventative and repair kit
  - spare fluorescent tubes
  - Sportsman's goop
- seam sealer
- 3/8" Grommet kit

*A "must" for repairing those leaks you discovered in last night's rain!*

• Fishing Poles and Tackle


[Need Fishing Tips?](#)

**FUNDAMENTALS  
OF  
FISHING**

## GETTING CLEAN

 bath towels

 wash cloths

 shower kit

Tupperware Box, etc.

*"toiletry" type items*

- toothbrushes
- toothpaste
- dental floss
- shampoo/conditioner
  - soap
  - q tips
  - deodorant
- razor/shaving cream
  - mirror

*the mirror you find in the camping section of Walmart or wherehaveya - it has a handy little hook for hanging it.*

**Besides toiletries you won't want to forget**



**any prescription medication family members need to take!**

### **FIRST AID KIT**



#### **Buying A First Aid Kit: Which company kit is best?**

Purchasing a commercially packaged kit from either of the following four companies, is as close as any to putting a doctor in your pack:

Atwater Carey (800/359-1646)

Adventure Medical Kits (800/324-3517)

Outdoor Research (800/421-2421)

Sawyer (800/356-7811)

Other commercially packaged kits cannot hold a candle to any of these four.

If you are having trouble finding any of the above kits in your local stores, or wish to obtain specialty first aid gear to refill your kit, then look no further than Chinook Medical Gear-the best, one-stop, mail-order shopping source. You can get their catalogue by calling 800/766-1365.

**Practice assembling and using your new stove, lantern and tent in your backyard.**

**You might even do a "backyard overnighter" with the kids for practice. Cook up a dinner of camping style food, tell some campfire tales and tuck the kids in their bags in the tent for the night.**

**You'll be glad you did a test run.**

**It's always better to get your act together in the comfort of your own backyard than to arrive at a campsite tired, hungry and clueless about how to make camp.**

**You may want to even try setting it up in the dark in your backyard to get the hang of it.**

**You NEVER know!!!!**

[Click Here for](#)



[Manuals](#)

### **COMPANY ADDRESSES**

**Do you need an address or phone number for an outdoor gear company?  
[Here is a listing of a contact information for some of the major gear companies.](#)**



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Sleeping Quarters

*Tent camping is an excellent way to get started camping with your family.*

*But what if a tent just isn't for you?  
Maybe your family craves a few more comforts.*

[\[MOTORHOMES, TENT TRAILERS, AND OTHER WALLS IN THE WILDERNESS\]](#)

[\[Motor Homes\]](#) [\[Camper vans\]](#)

[\[Travel Trailers\]](#) [\[Truck Campers {other truck options}\]](#) [\[Pop-up Tent Trailers.\]](#) [\[LEAN-TOS.\]](#) [\[CABINS\]](#)

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### MOTORHOMES, TENT TRAILERS, AND OTHER WALLS IN THE WILDERNESS

It would be unfair to dismiss other forms of camping besides tenting without mentioning their merits.

Family camping does not just mean parents and children. Grandparent's camp, too, and many who are older or disabled would have to stay home if they had to depend solely on tents for shelter.

A friend of ours father has had two knee operations that make the simple acts of ducking into and out of tent doors and getting into and out of a sleeping bag on the floor close to impossible. The small RV he and his wife bought enables them to continue camping with them once or twice a summer.

Over the age of thirty-five, humans tend to lose about 1 percent of their bone mass every year. Although this degeneration can be delayed by exercise, the fact is that by the time many Americans reach their seventies, brittle, deteriorated bones have made sleeping on the pads we associate with tent camping painful. Recreational vehicles and tent trailers come equipped with thick foam mattresses that reduce the skeletal pressure and, just as important; the beds are set at a convenient height.

Past a certain age, the ability to shut a door and close a couple of windows against the cold or fire up a generator-powered air conditioner becomes more than a mere connivance; it is the only way many people can safely continue to enjoy the outdoors. Trailers and motor homes also makes sense for families that will be on the road a lot during extended vacations and may find themselves taking the last campsite available late in the evenings or ending the night in public rest areas.

Another consideration is weather.

A little rain during a tent camping trip is romantic; a lot of it and people become quarrelsome and exasperated.

Having a trailer or camper parked in your drive greatly reduces the amount of packing you need to do before a trip.

The living and sleeping quarters are ready to go. About all you need to do is buy groceries and occasionally refill the propane tanks. That's something to consider if your work is all-consuming and vacations are limited to weekend getaways.

Lastly, hard-sided vehicles provide a sense of protection tents can't match. While crime in campgrounds is generally not a problem, no one can completely ignore security. And in a deep pocket of country that dips from western Montana into Wyoming and Idaho, it's not only against human thieves that we lock the doors. Grizzly bears have on rare occasion's torn apart tents and killed campers.

In a few campgrounds along well-traveled bear corridors, only hard-sided vehicles are admitted.



Because the initial cost can be substantial, keep in mind that most types of trailers and recreational vehicles can be rented. So can tents and basic camping gear. Leasing a larger RV doesn't come cheaply, but it's probably a good idea to camp in one for a week or so to see what it's like before investing a lot of money in buying one.

Let's take a look at the advantages and disadvantages of each of these options.

## Motor Homes

[\[Class A motor homes\]](#) [\[Class B motor homes\]](#) [\[Class C motor homes\]](#)

**Class A motor homes** which are constructed on specially built chassis, are the largest recreational vehicles.



Many retired people live in them year-round, towing small cars to drive. When the motor home is moored in camp. They are like yachts in a harbor slip, offering every Convenience of home and then some. But big motor homes can be expensive and unless you own an oil refinery, your bank book will take a hit each time you turn the key

You can't turn them around or park them just anywhere, and many campgrounds and scenic byways have length restrictions that preclude their use.

Lots of families vacation in *Class A Motor Homes*, however you would have to stretch the definition to call it camping!

**Class B motor homes** are built on van chassis.



They differ from *Class C* motor homes only because they lack an overhead bed that sticks out over the driver and passenger seats.

The boxy old Winnebago was the prototypical *Class C motor home*.



Its descendants are more aerodynamic, more fuel-efficient vehicles, with better handling on the road.

Both *Class B* and *Class C* motor-homes are fully self-contained, with propane heaters and kitchen units; electrical power is provided by generators.

Although these motor homes are much more versatile than *Class A* motor homes, you still have to resist their conveniences, at least in fair weather, and step outside the door to breathe the scent of nature.

Micro-mini motor homes are smaller yet.

Built on truck chassis, some of the 4-cylinder models provide little more than comfortable sleeping quarters, although many contain stoves, bathrooms, air conditioners, and propane heaters. Most have standing room, but there isn't a lot of space to lounge around. That, however, is not altogether a drawback, because it encourages vacationers to spend more time outdoors.

*Class B* motor homes offer comfort, safety, and convenience for families that prefer the comforts of home.

## Camper vans

A conversion van is a regular van to which the builder adds taller roof and whatever interior improvement he wishes.



Conversions built on one-ton cargo vans are as large as small motor homes and can be as elaborate as the owner cares to make them. They are a good alternative for the craftsman who aspires to having a motor home yet can not afford the price of one.

Van conversions range in size, the smallest being the familiar Volkswagen camper, which is fully equipped at the factory. These compact vans are the Swiss Army knives of the RV universe.

Today's VW campers, besides being mechanically more reliable, offer an incredible range of conveniences, from sinks to stoves to overhead, pop-up extensions with full-size beds. They are really too small for a family of four to comfortably live out of, but are a great vehicle to take tent camping. VW vans make lunch or dinner on the road a cinch, offer a cozy retreat for playing cards or reading during bad weather, and have enough lie-down room to nap in at roadside rests.



Volkswagen van campers are the "Swiss Army knife" of RV camping -small - but efficient.

Recreational vehicles allow people who aren't interested in "roughing it" to enjoy camping with family and friends. They are especially useful for helping elderly and disabled individuals to enjoy summer outings.

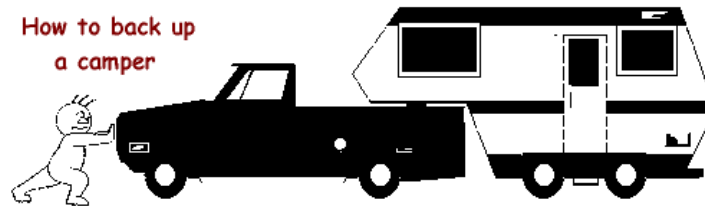
## Travel Trailers



Travel trailers offer the obvious advantage of being detachable, leaving you with a car or truck to drive after making camp instead of a lumbering, ground-hugging motor home. But that is their Achilles heel as well, because you have to go through the trouble of hitching them up and leveling them out each time you move. Also, the overall length of the rig can get to be a little tiresome to maneuver around.

RV sales have cut into the travel-trailer market, but they remain popular among families that haul them once or twice a summer to semi permanent camps. They also are a favorite of hunters, who park them at trailheads and leave them between days off. Some people have abused camping privileges by leaving their trailers in the best sites for weeks on end and visiting only on weekends; fortunately many campgrounds have enacted policies prohibiting this practice

In recent years, fifth-wheel trailers have gained greatly in popularity. They have a forward-Overhanging section that hitches directly over the real axle in a truck bed. This makes them tow easily and track better on sharp turns; it also reduces the overall length of the outfit. The disadvantage is the same as it is for any large trailer. It takes a lot of horses to haul them, and a lot of fuel to feed the horses.



## Truck Campers



Truck-toppers are removable units designed to sit in the beds of pickup trucks. Larger ones have an overhanging bed that projects out over the cab of the truck. Though they are less costly than similar-sized motor homes, most are equipped with the same amenities, including propane heaters, stoves, and sinks. They are extremely popular in western states, where rough roads sometimes necessitate four-wheel drive or high clearance.

There are a few drawbacks. Floor space is limited by the width of the truck bed, so there isn't much walking-around room. Taller camper units make the whole rig tipsy Placing four feet of wind resistance on top of the cab pretty much shoots the gas mileage, too And, of course, passenger space is limited by the seating in the cab.

Despite these disadvantages, truck campers are a practical choice for some campers. If you consider this alternative, avoid the mistake of buying too big a camper, which puts a strain on the engine, brakes, and suspension, and makes the entire rig unwieldy One solution is to buy a top with an

accordion-type extension that raises to full height in camp but folds down for easier driving. Such roof extensions also are options on some vans and motor homes.

## Pop-up Tent Trailers



Tent trailers offer many of the advantages of recreational vehicles, while preserving more of the outdoor camping experience tenters enjoy

Tent trailers have collapsible sides and either plastic or aluminum tops that lock onto the body for towing and crank to full height in camp. The beds are housed in side wings that slide out from the main body. Some are as luxuriously appointed as larger motor homes, with such conveniences as showers, refrigerators, kitchen units, toilets, awnings, zip-on rooms that you can add in camp, bicycle and boat racks, outside cargo lockers, sofa-bed layouts, even portable whirlpool baths. Pop-up trailers operate either off 12-volt car batteries or hook to standard 110-volt electrical outlets. Most come with propane tanks to operate the hot-water and stove units, and sometimes even the lights.

At the other end of the spectrum are smaller models that have little besides a take-down table and the extensible wings that make up into camp beds.

Having little wind resistance, tent trailers pull like a whisper, and once you get used to routine, you can set them up in ten or fifteen minutes. They can be retracted just as quickly.

The elevated sleeping area and ease of hauling make tent trailers good choices for older campers. Kids like them, too; they instantly convert the big beds into playgrounds once trailer is opened. Screen windows keep tent trailers airy and cool in hot weather, and can be easily heated either by the furnace system or a lantern.

About the only disadvantages of tent trailers are their prices. A fancy one will cost almost as much as the car you'll need to haul it. There is a good used market, but if the canvas is in good condition, even vintage tent trailers retain their value.

Pop-up tent campers offer many of the advantages of recreational vehicles, while preserving more of the outdoor camping experience that tenters enjoy.

## LEAN-TOS

As a camping experience, living in a lean-to constructed of log walls and a cloth front somewhere between tenting and renting a small cabin. Inside the walls, you have the corn of individual beds, a table and chairs, and perhaps even a woodstove to test your pioneer cooking skills. Yet you are never more than a millimeter of canvas away from the elements. Fair weather, you can roll up the cloth so that the entire front stays open.

Lean-tos hold a rustic attraction for parents and children alike. Baxter State Park in Maine has a long-standing tradition of offering rental lean-tos in several campgrounds.

Although lean-tos are not widely available, they offer a unique experience that every camper should try.



## CABINS



Rustic cabins are an option most campers overlook. You won't find them listed in all brochures and guidebooks, but many national forests quietly offer them for a nominal fee. A few national parks also rent cabins, some with canvas walls.

Is it camping? Perhaps not, but it is a form of pioneer living that offers much the same rewards by bringing families together in a spirit of common work. Cabins are an excellent choice for larger parties and for winter outings, when snow camping with small children can be more hassle than it's worth.

To find out about reserving cabins, contact local forest district headquarters. Weekends tend to book up quickly, so plan your trip well in advance. Be prepared to either hike, snowshoe, or cross-country ski to some cabins. Kids' plastic sleds make the job of hauling gear a lot easier than it would be if your back did all the work. No matter what you hear about provisions, always pack along an extra propane or gasoline lantern. Dark log walls and small windows combine to make most cabins pretty gloomy without the extra light.

Renting a wilderness cabin can be a great way to get a reluctant family involved in outdoor activities. For many, it is a relatively inexpensive way to take a family vacation.

Today, a growing trend among camping enthusiasts is to combine the back-to-nature aesthetic of the great outdoors with the convenience of a cabin. The following list, courtesy of Kampgrounds of America (KOA), reveals the top reasons why campers are turning to cabins:

- People who live in small houses and apartments in urban areas don't have room to store a lot of camping gear.
- People drive smaller, fuel-efficient cars that aren't capable of towing a trailer or able to carry tents, coolers and other camping equipment.
- New campers want to try the outdoors experience without having to buy or borrow a lot of gear.
  - Young families find cabins to be a comfortable, convenient alternative to tent camping.
- People want affordable accommodations that offer the outdoor experience with the comforts of clean restrooms, hot showers, laundry facilities and convenience stores nearby.
- Campers want to be close to recreation, sightseeing, historic, entertainment and shopping venues.

In response to this trend, many campgrounds across the country are offering on-site cabins that are perfect for new campers, seasoned veterans, and travelers looking for an alternative to a drab motel room.

Kampgrounds of America, which started its Kamping Kabins program in 1982, had the foresight to see the potential popularity of cabin camping. Today, they have more than 3,800 Kamping Kabins at nearly 500 KOA Kampgrounds in North America and the number continues to grow.

Kamping Kabins have log-frame bunks and double beds that are equipped with mattresses. You bring your own sleeping bags or bed linens, in addition to basic kitchen items to cook over the outdoor fire grate. The cabins come in two varieties: one-room, which sleeps four, and two-room, which sleeps six. Most have electricity and some have heating or air conditioning. For added security, all Kamping Kabins have lockable doors and a KOA owner or manager is on-site 24 hours a day.

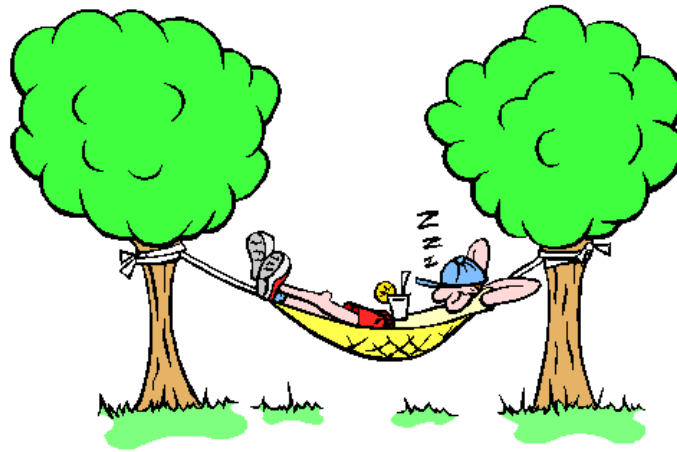
Kamping Kabins are great for a weekend getaway or as an affordable resting place on your way to other adventures. Depending on the geographic location, one-room Kamping Kabin rates begin at around \$30 per night and range to \$60 per night.

For more information about Kamping Kabins, as well as the locations of KOA Campgrounds, visit [www.koa.com](http://www.koa.com).



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## Camping in a Hammock



Have you ever considered using a hammock as an alternative to the traditional tent? Many others have! Hammocks are becoming quite popular not only for backpackers but also for the common camper. These people are often referred to as "treehangers." With a little practice, common sense and preparation, a hammock can be used in just about any type of weather - rain, cold, high winds, etc. Rain flies, hand warmers, and netting keep you out of the elements, toasty warm and away from the nagging bugs.

There are many advantages to using a hammock when camping. They are lightweight and are more affordable than an average tent. They are easy to set up and take down. They can be used in just about any type of landscape. And most importantly, they are extremely comfortable. In addition to a good nights sleep, camping hammocks also provide a great place to relax when hanging out around camp.

Using a hammock is fun and quite easy to do. Like anything else, experience teaches you the best lessons. Here are just a couple common mistakes that you should be sure to avoid.

### **Look out for dead trees**

Always be sure that you evaluate the integrity of the trees you are planning to tie your hammock to. Be sure they are sturdy and will not collapse when put under stress.

### **Examine your ropes for wear**

A damage rope weakens your hammocks performance and can easily break with your weight. Wrap your ropes around trees at least twice before tying your knots. This will reduce the wear on your ropes and also protect the trees.

Tying good knots is essential when using hammocks. The [bowline](#), [taut-line hitch](#) and the [fisherman's knots](#) are the three most important.

A bowline knot is a strong, solid knot and should be used to tie the ropes around the trees to supports your weight. Use the taut-line hitch for your rain flies. These knots are easily tighten or loosen based on your needs. Note: [rain fly](#) ropes should NOT be used to support your weight in the hammock. And finally the fisherman's knot. This knot is used to attach ropes together for extension purposes. Spend some time practicing these knots and you shouldn't have any problems hanging your hammock correctly and safely.

Lying in a hammock is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress and is a great way to relax. The way that the hammock contours to your body's natural shape and the fact that your body's weight is so evenly distributed gives you a feeling of weightlessness.

Hammocks are a great alternative when camping

[Read More on Hammocks . . .](#)



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### As Primitive as it gets



**For those that want to really get back to nature, and go beyond the somewhat civilized campgrounds of state parks and the like, primitive camping is the answer.**

Because of the setting and the effort required to get into the backcountry, where virtually all primitive camping takes place, close attention to logistical considerations is essential. This begins with equipment. It should be light, highly functional, durable, and easy to use.

### **The logical place to begin is with the backpack.**

These have advanced light years in the last generation, with solid yet lightweight internal frames and designs that distribute heavy loads more effectively. Along with your tent and footwear, this is the gear that demands the greatest amount of thought. Get the best you can afford, and give careful thought to the type of climate and terrain in which you will be hiking. For example, areas that receive a lot of rainfall demand a waterproof backpack or one with a cover, which is easy to put on and is also waterproof.

## **Your choice of tent, ground cloth, and sleeping gear**

also need careful consideration.

The temperature ranges in which you will be camping figure in prominently here. Whatever the climate though, your sleeping bag should be one which is equal to the task with at least 5 degrees F of leeway. Spending a cold, miserable night is a primitive camper's nightmare, with no vehicle to retreat to. The sleeping bag (and mummy types tend to weigh less, a vital concern for the back packer) should also be one which will not become clammy or hold moisture. And you need a good, compact pad to go with it.

## **Next comes clothing**

Venturing into the backcountry for miles toting a pack demands comfortable, lightweight and waterproof hiking boots. You will want at least one change of clothing, and materials that offer warmth and dry quickly deserve special consideration. In rainy regions, good raingear also looms large. Throw in a cap or hat, or maybe a balaclava or hooded sweater for colder climates and you have the basics covered. Of course, additions to this list will be required depending on local weather. If in doubt, check with someone familiar with the area and its climatic vagaries.

All of this gear--tent, pack, clothing, footwear, sleeping bag and pad, and ground cloth--should weigh 20 pounds or less. That leaves you another 20 pounds of weight for food, cooking gear and accessories. With careful planning you can keep pack weight to a total of 40 pounds or less for two- or three-day trips, although longer ventures will require more weight and extra planning.

## **Choices when it comes to cooking ware range widely**

Compact fold-up kits, which have multiple uses, tend to be best, and you can cook some wonderful-one course stews, goulashes, or hearty soups in a single pot. Add a cup, a plate, and utensils and about all that remains to feed the inner man or woman is the actual food and a way to cook it.

Dehydrated foods are the way to go. Almost any type of pasta, with some dried vegetables, meat, and spices added, can make a delicious dish. All they require are an appropriate amount of water and cooking. Add dried fruit and/or some sweets, and you can stock up on plenty of calories without any sacrifice in taste. If you are in an area where [fishing](#) or hunting is possible, you have even more potential for a varied diet. Plan every meal, including snacks, in advance. If you have a menu and follow it, you'll be in good shape and can even anticipate the tasty treats that lie before you.

Cooking can be done over an open fire in many areas, but it demands greater skill and is not permitted in some areas. Arguments in favor of this approach include the simple joys of a fire and some reduction in pack weight. Generally speaking though, you'll do better in following the no trace ethic and in cooking if you use a lightweight stove and the appropriate fuel. Coleman, long a leader in the field, makes excellent one- and two-burner stoves, which add little weight to the primitive camper's burden. Don't forget water purification tablets or a pump with a filter, and it is best to treat even

cooking water that will be brought to a boil.

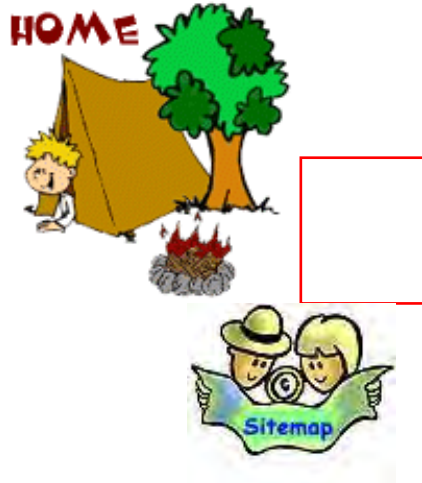
## Finally, there are the accessories

A first aid kit, reliable fire starters (a couple of cigarette lighters always reside in my gear), a small flashlight, soap, towel and wash cloth, any needed medications, and personal toiletries also belong in this category. So do necessary maps and trail guides, a compass or GPS, and a basic repair kit. While not essential, some reading material, a camera, and a personal luxury item or two can be added.

Whether you are highly experienced in primitive camping or a novice, make a point of maintaining a list of all the equipment you use. Fine-tune this list after each trip, and in time you will get packing for future trips down to a fine art. Even then though, there's one area that always cries out for some experimentation. There are few backcountry pleasures more satisfying than the simple acts of preparing and eating a fine dinner, and the avid camper always looks for tasty new additions to the menu.

Primitive camping, properly done, can be as comfortable as it is enjoyable. Add to that the fact that it offers the ideal escape from the hustle and bustle, the headaches and heartaches of our fast-paced world, and you have ample reason to take to the trail in any and all seasons.

A good [topo map](#) and understanding of how to use it is essential to those venturing into wilderness areas to camp.



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING ETHICS

mainly in The Backcountry

## Ethics

### The imperfect science of sanitation and ethical camping procedures-

*It is no longer acceptable to build beds of green pine boughs (or dead ones, for that matter), lash log furniture, trench tents, hack green trees and otherwise disturb the natural environment to suit our whims. There's just too little of the wilderness and too many of us. If we are to preserve the remaining backcountry for future generations, then each of us must adopt a solemn "I care" attitude. We must unfailingly practice ethical use of our natural resources, and we must teach - indeed, preach - ethics to all who will listen. And for those who turn the other ear, there must be laws . . . and penalties. The alternative is regulation upon regulation and a lessened quality of experience for everyone.*

### Here are the recommended land and water use procedures:

#### Disposal of human and food wastes

Bury these wastes in mineral soil (if possible), four to twelve inches deep. The upper foot of soil contains the majority of decomposer organisms and so ensures the fastest rate of decay.

Toilet paper should be burned.

Unburned tissue may take a season or more to degrade. Human waste will be gone in a matter of days if the weather is warm. When camping on the granite rock of the Canadian shield, or anywhere soil cover is at a premium, simply follow the recommended procedure for "shallow burial" and cover the waste with whatever soil cover is available.

Please do not leave leftover food around camp "for the animals"

- this will upset their ecology and make them dependent on man, not to mention the aggravation they'll bestow on campers who will later occupy the site.

#### Fish entrails

It is illegal in most states to throw fish entrails into a lake or river, and

for good reason. Bacteria consume the viscera and multiply, which raises germ levels to possibly dangerous proportions. Bacteria also use vast amounts of oxygen, which in turn robs fish and aquatic organisms of this essential element. Since food scraps react similarly, they too should never be tossed into a body of water.

Bury fish remains as you would food wastes - 100 feet from water and well away from the campsite area. If you are camping in a very remote area where seagulls are common, you may leave viscera on a large rock - well away from human habitation - for the gulls. This procedure is not acceptable on heavily used lakes!

Cans and bottles should always be packed out of the wilderness. Tin cans should be burned out and crushed flat with the back of an axe or your boot, then packed out. The typical steel can requires about 75 years to decompose completely; aluminum cans may need 500 years! A glass bottle could last one million years in the environment!

We do not bury cans and bottles today.

We

**PACK THEM OUT!**

Your garbage detail will be easier if you make a strong nylon bag, with drawstring, for this purpose.

### **Dish washing**

Dishes should never be washed in a waterway. Food scraps encourage bacterial growth and even biodegradable detergents kill essential microorganisms. Dishes should be washed on land in a large cooking pot. Dish water is best disposed of on mineral soil, 100 feet from a lake or river.

Swimming is fine, but "bathing" is not. If you use soap to wash your hair and body, please rinse on the shore (with a bucket of water), well away from the water's edge.

### **And a word about biodegradable products**

It's fashionable today to extol the virtues of biodegradable products over those which do not break down by bacterial action. Certainly, you should choose biodegradable detergents, tissues, and toilet paper whenever possible. Be aware, however, that even the best biodegradable products depend upon bacteria, moisture . . .

and time for decomposition.

And this means increased germ counts, lowered levels of oxygen, and visual pollution for some time.

There's no such thing as a free ride!

### **Bough beds**

Cutting evergreen branches to make bough beds is illegal, immoral, and damaging to the trees. An air mattress or foam pad works better. The use of dead evergreen boughs or mosses should also be discouraged as this



material provides a "surface cover" which blots out sunlight and consequently kills vegetation below. Campsites should always be left as natural as possible so that nature can effectively do "its thing."

Cutting green trees is, of course, illegal and damaging. Since green wood burns poorly, there's no sense cutting it for firewood. You'll find plenty of good dead fire wood in the backcountry if you look for it.

[\(see The Campfire Page\)](#)

### **Graffiti**

It's always shocking to see initials and names carved or painted on trees and rocks in the backcountry. But it does happen even in the most remote wilderness. The rationale is certainly ignorance and insensitivity, neither of which can be tolerated by those of us who know and care.



### **Noise**

Most people take to the backcountry to experience peace and quiet. Loud, man-made disturbances are obviously unwelcome and in state and national parks, usually illegal. Please keep radios at home or use a personal "Walkman".

### **Color**

Some campers are offended by brightly colored camping gear and clothing. Consequently, the trend is toward gentle "earth tones" - greens, browns and grays. However, there's no denying the safety (and photographic) advantages of brightly colored tents, canoes and clothing in remote areas. Despite much hoopla, the color issue is over-exaggerated. There are more pressing environmental concerns in the backcountry.

### **Lugged hiking boots**

Chunky soled mountain boots churn up much more soil than non-aggressive footwear and are therefore discouraged in popular hiking areas. Primitive peoples got along quite nicely without Vibram lugs and you will too, not to mention the freedom of foot you'll enjoy by selecting lighter more flexible shoes. Nonetheless, the damage that results from use of Rambo-style-boots is probably over-rated. Like "color," there are more pressing concerns.

### **Fire site**

Fire sites should always be left as natural as possible. In military terms, "everything that's not growing or nailed down" should be removed from the premises. Every scrap of paper, every shred of aluminum foil, down to the

tiniest speck, should be picked out and hauled home. Ideally, there should be no partially burned wood left in the grate - absolutely everything should be consumed by flame before you pass on.

It is permissible, but no longer traditional (or even desirable) to leave cut firewood for those who will later occupy the site. Some modern campers consider the sight of a woodpile an "affront," one which detracts from the wildness of the area.

So cut only the wood you need and put your fire dead out  
- check it with your hands to be sure it is DEAD OUT!  
- before you leave.

## Education

Unfortunately, there are not yet enough of us who care who will carry the banner for ethical land use. We must spread the word as gospel, but quietly, sensibly and in a non-intimidating way, with full realization that you can always get more bears with honey than with guns. Studies show that the majority of campers mean well even though they often do what is improper. Most abuse occurs out of ignorance. The majority of people will willingly follow your lead if properly taught.



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Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Kids & Camping



*How do you get a girl or boy excited about the outdoors? How do you compete with the television and remote control? How do you prove to a kid that success comes from persistence, spirit and logic, which the outdoors teaches, and not from pushing buttons?*

#### ISN'T IT DANGEROUS?

**The things most people worry about are wolves, bears, and drownings. These are actually much less of a worry than sprained ankles on portages, cutting themselves playing Junior Woodsman, burning themselves in the campfire and so on. Same dangers that can happen at home!**

[\[General Info\]](#) [\[Bathroom Issues\]](#)

[\[Camping with Infants\]](#)

[\[The Practice Trip\]](#) [\[Packing Suggestions\]](#) [\[The First Real Trip\]](#) [\[Tips for Infant Camping\]](#)

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[\[Tips for Parents\]](#) [\[While at Camp\]](#) [\[Choosing a Safe Site\]](#) [\[Kids and Campfires\]](#) [\[Animal Proofing\]](#)



👤 Trips with children should be to places where there is a guarantee of action.

A good example is camping in a park where large numbers of wildlife can be viewed, such as squirrels, chipmunks, deer and even bears.

Other good choices are [fishing](#), canoeing, [swimming](#), etc.

Boys and girls want action, not solitude.

[Need Fishing Tips?](#)

FUNDAMENTALS  
OF  
FISHING

👤 Enthusiasm is contagious.

If you aren't excited about an adventure, you can't expect a child to be. Show a genuine zest for life in the outdoors, and point out everything as if it is the first time you have ever seen it.

👤 Always, always, always be seated when talking to someone small.

This allows the adult and child to be on the same level.

That is why fishing in a small boat is perfect for adults and kids. Nothing is worse for youngsters than having a big person look down at them and give them orders.

[Need Fishing Tips?](#)

### FUNDAMENTALS OF Fishing

👤 Always show a child how to do something, whether it is [gathering sticks for a campfire](#), [cleaning a trout](#) or [tying a knot](#).

**Never tell—  
always show.**

A button usually clicks to "off" when a kid is lectured. But they can learn behavior patterns and outdoor skills by watching adults, even when the adults are not aware they are being watched.

👤 **Let kids be kids!**

Let the adventure happen, rather than trying to force it within some preconceived plan. If they get sidetracked chasing butterflies or sneaking up on chipmunks, let them be.

A youngster can have more fun turning over rocks and looking at different kinds of bugs than sitting in one spot, waiting for a [fish](#) to bite.

👤 Expect young peoples' attention spans to be short.

Instead of getting frustrated about it, use it to your advantage. How? By bringing along a bag of candy and snacks. When there is a lull in the camp activity, out comes the bag. Don't let them know what goodies await, so each one becomes a surprise.

👤 Make absolutely certain the child's [sleeping bag](#) is clean, dry and warm.

Nothing is worse than discomfort when trying to sleep, but a refreshing sleep makes for a positive attitude the next day. In addition, kids can become quite scared of [animals](#) at night. The parent should not wait for any signs of this, but always play the part of the outdoor guardian, the one who will "take care of everything."

👤 Provide each child with a flashlight. To prevent any arguments, make sure each one has their own.

Children love to play with the flashlights, and having one also makes them

more at ease after dark.

Flashlights are also handy when making trips to the restroom, for making shadow puppets on tent walls, and for reading before bed.

### Bathroom Issues

#### Scary Toilets

A pit toilet may seem like a perfectly normal thing to you, but your toddler may not agree. These toilets can smell pretty bad and it's easy to see why some children are afraid of falling in. When you tell your child about camping, be sure to include information about the bathrooms.

Flush toilets can be loud and are not like the potty at home. If your child will still go on a potty chair you may want to bring one along - just in case.

#### Yucky Paper

Most camp bathrooms have industrial quality (sand paper) toilet paper. Your young bath roomer may refuse to use this stuff.

Some camps provide little squares of paper. A parent may be able to use this stuff but a young child might have some problems.

Many of the toilet paper dispensers make it quite difficult for you to get the paper off of the roll. This is actually intentional. The idea is that you will use less paper if it is really hard to get it off of the roll. As a former park employee this is the silliest thing I have ever seen. The bathrooms always end up with bits of paper all over the floor and people break these irritating dispensers all the time. Your child may not be able to get the paper off of these rolls at all.

The biggest problem of all is an empty dispenser. You will find these every busy weekend you camp.

Bring your own toilet paper!

#### Showers and Bathing

Camp showers can be a test of your patience. The temperature may be hard to adjust (or impossible) and the water may run cold for some time before getting warm. Most camp showers require quarters - and I have run out of money in the middle of shampooing my hair.

Children who normally take baths at home will not appreciate a camp shower.

Many camp grounds do not offer bathing facilities at all. If you plan on camping for any length of time you will have to adapt.

Sun Showers (a large black bag with a shower head) are great for camping. You can use them at home a few times to allow your children to become used to the idea. Just set up the sun shower and let our kids in bathing suits try it out! Most kids just think of it as an interesting sprinkler.

Sponge baths can work quite well, especially if you are camping in cold weather.

#### Potty Training

Camping trips can be a real chance for breakthroughs in this area!

Camping trips are convenient for potty training. There are no 'accidents' on your rug or your furniture and a potty chair can simply be set up anywhere in your camp site so your child won't feel isolated while trying to go. You will have more time with your child when camping, and this can be the most help of all.

📌 Kids quickly relate to outdoor ethics.

They will enjoy [building a safe campfire](#) and picking up [all their litter](#), and they will develop a sense of pride that goes with it. A good idea is to bring extra plastic garbage bags to pick up any trash you come across. Kids long remember when they do something right that somebody else has done wrong.

📌 If you want youngsters hooked on the outdoors for life, take a close-up photograph of them holding up fish they have caught, blowing on the campfire or completing other camp tasks. Young children can forget how much fun they had, but they never forget if they have a picture of it.

📌 Teach young children to stay within eyesight, and older children within earshot.

📌 [Teach children to stay where they are if they discover they are lost. Instruct them to find a nearby tree and stay with it until they are found.](#)

📌 Children over the age of four can carry a simple survival kit, or at least a whistle around their neck to call for help when lost. The standard distress signal is three blows to indicate "I'm lost" or "I need help."

📌 Children get cold faster than adults.

The key to comfortable camping with kids is to dress them in several layers, which can be peeled off as they get warm or added on as they cool off.

📌 [Bring along a game](#) you all like to play at home.

Playing it outdoors with a lantern or flashlights will add to the fun.

📌 Teach your kids to treat the outdoors kindly.

[Make sure all waste is disposed of properly when camping or hiking along the trails.](#)

📌 Camping with children is more fun when you bring a playmate along. Two or more children will entertain themselves for longer periods than will a single child.

👤 The least important word you can ever say to a kid is "I."

Keep track of how often you are saying "Thank you" and "What do you think?"

If you don't say them very often, you'll lose out.

Finally, the most important words of all are:

*"I am proud of you."*

**Be sure to read up on  
Sun Smart!**

## Camping with Infants



Camping with infants is a blast!  
Even very young babies love camping. My oldest son started camping at the age of two.

This went so well -  
we started the other two boys camping at at around 6 weeks or so.

These early camping trips were a joy -  
after we ironed out a few bugs!

Camping with babies is easier than you might think!  
Babies are adaptable and sleep more than toddlers.  
Give it a try!

Camping trips rarely go perfectly the first time -  
but you can avoid a lot of serious complications with a bit of practice and  
planning.

So how do you practice camping?  
Just do it!

### **The Practice Trip**

The first camping trip should be a short two night adventure near your home. This allows your infant the chance to become comfortable with the outdoors without over-doing it.

A long trip can become disorienting for a baby or young child. Children have to adapt to long car rides. This takes training and patience. You don't want to start off your first camping trip with a screaming infant - so keep your trip close to home!

Pick a spot without extreme temperatures.  
Even tiny babies can put up with almost anything you might expose them to, but you will have to work harder to keep them comfortable.

Heat seems to be the extreme to avoid.

You can keep a baby warm on snowy nights but it's hard to cool an unhappy baby in 95 degrees fahrenheit

Infants under six months old should not wear sun screen unless your pediatrician recommends it.

Even a baby kept in the shade can be exposed to a great deal of reflected sunlight. A baby with a sunburn is a sad thing. Avoid it at all costs!

Infants require a lot of equipment and supplies.

If you forget something dire or realize that something you left home would really be handy you can always go home and get it. You don't want to find out about these little surprises 200 miles from home.

Camping with a baby is always entertaining, but it may be quite a bit different than the trips you are used to taking. Give yourself a chance to get used to the changes.

Plan to arrive at your campsite long before dark.

You will need time in daylight to set up your tent and get situated. Even if you have set up your tent 100 times you may find it more difficult with your new addition. I hope you have a tent that one person can set up alone if necessary. You will find this a necessity at one time or another if you plan to camp with babies or toddlers. Even babies need time to acclimate to your new surroundings.

A leisurely evening in your campsite will allow your baby to feel comfortable and secure.

## Packing Suggestions

For your practice trip go overboard. Pack more clothes than you think you'll need, more formula or baby food, diapers, wipes, etc.

You can't have too many diapers or wet wipes.

If you haven't already discovered how handy having wipes can be, you'll find out on a camping trip!

Disposable diapers aren't environmentally sound,

**PLEASE** throw them into a trash can or dumpster WITH a lid!

This is your chance to see what you'll really need.

Worry about packing space on your next trip.

I recommend packing lots of clothes -

but not too many items that are really heavy or bulky.

It's better to layer lighter clothing.

Temperature will fluctuate throughout each day and it is far more simple to add a layer or remove a layer of clothing when the climate changes rather than to re-dress your child five times a day.

*Make sure you bring snap-crotch garments!*

*It is heck to change a camping baby without 'em. Your baby will stay warmer on cold nights if she doesn't need to be stripped down for every diaper change.*





For a complete packing list for infants, [click here!](#)

## The First Real Trip

For your first real trip away from home I recommend you choose a campground you have camped at before. It is always best to be in familiar surrounds at first. This way you will know what facilities the park offers and where to find a pay phone.

Plan your trip with plenty of time to spare.

Just getting to your camping spot will usually take a lot longer than you anticipate. Diaper changes and an occasional stretch are a requirement. The best thing about camping with a baby is watching your child's reactions to the elements. A tree or clouds can keep a baby happy for hours. Please don't plan a day full of activities and hikes! I guarantee that you will enjoy these first trips without making big plans.

Take lots of pictures,  
go to sleep early

*(Be prepared to get up at dawn.  
No matter how late you put your child to bed,  
they will always get up at sunrise when you camp!),*

and relax!



Pre made formula is expensive -  
but sterile.

Powders are convenient but can be hard to mix at campground faucets.  
Some campgrounds have questionable water sources.

For more information on water [click here](#).

The biggest concern is keeping prepared formula cold. If you are in an RV with refrigeration it's no problem - but tent campers, please be careful!

Keeping bottles clean can be a real pain. I suggest Playtex Nursers with the disposable liners. If you use regular bottles - don't forget a bottle brush!

Even though you can't help it, people don't want to listen to a screaming baby. Though people do need to be more understanding of babies. They are just trying to communicate that something is wrong. Just do your best and **PLEASE DO NOT** let your child cry and cry and cry, etc., just to get the baby asleep or a punishment or what have you!

**Portable bassinet in your tent will secure your infant.**

Let the little ones age 6 months - 3 years sit in their stroller around the

campfire.

It lets them be a part of things and also keeps them safe and in a familiar environment.

Do not let youngsters get over tired while camping . . . keep them on their home routine of taking naps, eating regular meals, etc, and that helps reduce the crankiness that can result in crying/noise for those around you.

**Make it fun always, give them lots to do,  
let them git dirty, messy and have fun.**

**It is hard on everyone if someone is always saying don't touch that,  
don't get dirty, don't, don't, don't . . .**

**Enjoy your kids when they are small, they don't stay that way long.**

**Is insect repellent recommended for babies and young children?**

This is a common concern of parents as West Nile Virus is spreading across the country. Luckily, children appear to be at low risk for the disease (American Academy of Pediatrics, Aug 2002.)

One of the most effective ways to protect against mosquito bites is by using insect repellent with DEET. However, these products should be used with caution.

In 2001 the Environmental Protection Agency made the following recommendations regarding the safe use of insect repellent with DEET for children:

- Do not apply to infants under two months of age. (Skin permeability becomes similar to adult by the second month of life.)
- Read and follow all directions and precautions on the product label.
- Do not apply over cuts, wounds or irritated skin.
- Do not apply to young children's hands or near eyes or mouth.  
*Since they put their fingers in their mouths so much.*
- Do not allow young children to apply products themselves.
- Use just enough to cover the exposed skin and/or clothing.
- Do not use under clothing.
- Avoid over-application.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- Wash treated clothing before wearing again.
- Do not use spray solutions in enclosed areas or near food.
- For use on face, apply to adult hands and then rub on face. Do not spray face. Avoid areas around eyes and mouth.

Experts agree that insect repellants containing DEET are the most effective. Years of DEET use have resulted in relatively few reports of adverse reactions. Most reported incidents have not been serious.

The American Academy of Pediatrics states that a 30 percent concentration is safe for both children and adults, but that 10 percent can be used for children if parents are concerned about the potential risks or if the threat of disease-carrying mosquitoes is small.

Even when the insect repellent you select does not contain DEET, citronella and other more "natural" repellents could cause problems in a young child if used liberally on the skin. I suggest you look into clothing that is both light for summer weather but also long to cover the skin, and use insect repellent sparingly.

*Source: The American Academy of Pediatrics*

[Natural Insect Repellents,](#)  
[CLICK HERE](#)

Learn to [identify poisonous plants](#) and know which plants are common in your area.

Poison ivy and poison oak will cause symptoms if touched, but there are numerous plants that are toxic when ingested.

### Camping with Toddlers

If you start your kids off camping before they learn to walk your toddler trips will go a bit more smoothly.

Camping with very young babies is a breeze compared to camping with toddlers . . .

Young babies easily assimilate into camp life.

They like to do what they do at home: sleep or watch the rest of the family.

Make them part of the action by giving them a spot in the midst of things.

The less time you spend lounging in your campsite the better. A toddler in a backpack or stroller can't eat sticks, crawl through your fire pit, trip over tent stakes, or get into other mischief.

If you plan on spending a lot of time in your campsite - come prepared!

Mobile babies and toddlers present the roughest challenge. If not confined, they need constant attention, taking one adult off the job. Some families surmount this problem by bringing a playpen or port-a-crib.

Camping with little ones requires a little attention to details.

**Some special areas of concern are:**

#### **Setup**

Crawling toddlers love to explore the tent once it is set up. They may sleep through the whole set-up process, safely buckled in their car seats. If they are awake, they are usually so enthralled by the new and exciting activity going on around them that they will be happy to perch, still buckled in, on a

picnic table or in the grass near your campsite. If you're camping with friends, work it out so that one adult is available to watch small children.

### **Diapers**

Most campsites will have garbage disposal available at or near each individual campsite. Disposable diapers are easy to pack and dispose of, but you can certainly camp with cloth diapers. Large-sized plastic storage bags will hold soiled diapers until you return home, as will a sealable plastic container.

The tent floor, picnic table, or a sling spread on the ground makes a changing table au naturel!

### **Creepy crawlers**

First, remember the rule:

"Your children will get dirty."

Dress the crawling ones appropriately, police your campsite for poison ivy, sharp sticks, or anything that appears dangerous to you, and then let them explore nature. You can spread a quilt or blanket on the ground for their play area. You can sew old towels together for a huge, easily washable, camping quilt. Border this play area with your lawn chairs, some favorite toys, or a couple of adults who want to lie in the shade and read.

Babies love the company and the outdoors.

- Attach bells to your toddler's shoes so you can hear if he or she starts to wander off.

- Losing your child in an uninhabited area is incredibly frightening; so again, never leave your child unattended.

But, because toddlers are notorious for running off when you turn your back, you might want to carry a few current photos of your child with you and dress your child in bright colors.

Teach your child to yell back when you yell for him.

- Learn to [identify poisonous plants](#) and know which plants are common in your area.

Poison ivy and poison oak will cause symptoms if touched, but there are numerous plants that are toxic when ingested.

- And if you find your toddler eating ants, take heart - as a wise friend of mine used to say, "bugs have protein."  
*I would still refrain your child from eating them!*

### **Bathing**

Maybe baby has gotten dirtier than you can live with or you've applied insect repellent and need to wash it off. There are several ways to clean babies while camping. The bath house at the campsite is one option. Shower stalls designed to be accessible to the disabled usually have a tiled bench where you can sit and hold your child while you both shower. At the campsite, use a multi-purpose rubber bin as a tub. Heat water on your camp stove or over your fire, then fill the tub and bathe your baby before snuggling down to sleep.

**Ways you can put young Toddlers to work:**

Carry light loads to and from car; gather small sticks; hand Mom or Dad items such as tent stakes, utensils, buckets; remove rocks and other debris from the spot where the tent will be pitched.

## Camping with Pre-Schoolers



Do not underestimate your young child.  
A little kid can do a lot!

- Children's tapes!

When the traffic is really heavy and the kids starts to fuss, just pop in a tape and sing along.

Also great for at camp to ease a fussy child!

- When deciding where to go camping, consider the age of your child(ren), and their interests. Most 5 year olds are not interested in sight seeing, visiting historical villages, or watching how maple syrup is made. Campsites that offer nearby beaches (*a sure hit for any age*), miniature golfing (*putt putt golfing*), biking trails and related activities will provide for the child(ren)'s needs and give parents the stress-free (*or at least as stress-free as possible*) vacation they are looking for.

Vacations are for creating memories of fun in the sun with stress-free (or at least as stress-free as possible) activities for your family. If your choice of vacation spot only offers activities that appeal to adults, you will spend you time trying to convince a squirming and irritable junior that touring the house of President Jefferson IS FUN, rather than sitting back on your beach towel watching as an entertained and contented younger family member gets busy in the sand building his own version of President Jefferson's house.

- Pack lots of socks for each child. At least 2 pair or more per day. If there is a drop of water, or mud puddle of any kind to be found, they will find it! Don't expect the socks to come clean!
- Attach bells to your toddler's shoes so you can hear if he or she starts to wander off.
- Learn to [identify poisonous plants](#) and know which plants are common in your area.  
Poison ivy and poison oak will cause symptoms if touched, but there are numerous plants that are toxic when ingested.

### **Ways you can put young Preschoolers to work:**

Can do all the chores toddlers can do, plus spread sleeping bags, pads, and ground covers; simple cooking tasks, such as pouring water that isn't hot; building real or pretend fire rings with stones.

## Camping with Kids six through eight

- Pick a theme for the trip, [Click Here](#)

Always involve the kids in the basics of the camp. If the adults do all the preparing, cooking, and cleaning, the kids don't learn. The look on a child's face is priceless when they've made their first wood campfire or pitched their first tent.

- Always leave plenty of room for running, [swimming](#), biking or just throwing around a ball.

*Need Youth, Little League Baseball Tips, [Click Here!](#)*

- Always have paper and crayons handy, [cards are good also](#) - but don't worry about entertaining the kids 24/7.
- Camping is all about learning to entertain yourself without tv and games.

Just use your imagination and remember what it was like to be a kid . . . ideas will fill your mind almost instantly of things, little things we can do to make anything more fun!

- Attach bells to your toddler's shoes so you can hear if he or she starts to wander off.
- Learn to [identify poisonous plants](#) and know which plants are common in your area.

Poison ivy and poison oak will cause symptoms if touched, but there are numerous plants that are toxic when ingested.

### **Ways you can put young 6- To 8- Year- Olds to work:**

Attention spans can sometimes be short when it comes to chores, but kids this age can really start to help, not hinder. Many are excellent assistant chefs and tent pitchers; they make eager trash patrollers and water haulers.

A good challenge is getting a sleeping bag into a stuff stack.

### **Camping With Kids Nine *through* Twelve**

Bring along a big cloth laundry bag on all camping trips. In the bag pack [ball gloves, baseball](#)/softball, bat, Frisbee, tennis rackets and balls, soccer ball, etc.

Any sporting equipment your family might enjoy.  
This really saves the day!

Also pack a couple of blow-up beach balls. This gives the kids something to throw around in a swimming pool or even at a campsite.

Many parks (*state and federal*) offer a junior ranger program. Some of these programs will actually get the kids out of your hair for an hour or so, and others will require your children's attention.

Either way -  
these programs will educate and entertain the kids for quite a while.

### **Ways you can put your 9-To 12-Year-Olds to work:**

They are some of the very best campers, good at almost all chores. Some can pitch tents on their own, prepare simple meals and desserts.  
They still need supervision with stoves and fires.

## Camping with Teens

Let your teens bring books, walkmans, ect. When they want to be left alone they have something better to do than picking on a sibling or getting in trouble.

### Ways you can put your Teenagers to work:

They should be pretty confident of what needs to be done and will more than likely want to make be on their own -  
pitch thier own tent, etc

*Just last year (2003) my oldest (15 year old) and his cousin actually asked if they could have thier own campsite. With Mom and Dad checking on them from time to time, we allowed it.  
It was quite humorous.*



## Tips for Parents

Don't expect to make a whirlwind trip -  
Your children may not enjoy seeing five parks in four days.

Most young children will remember a great spot with good dirt for digging in -  
not many different famous monuments. Older kids will enjoy meeting other kids and moving from spot to spot will not encourage friendships.

Camping involves car travel -  
The more time you spend in the car with your child, the less you will enjoy your trip. A long car trip is frustrating for a pre-teen and impossible for a young child. A long initial trip is bearable -  
but if you plan on getting back in the car every day -  
be prepared for a long unpleasant trip.

This is your vacation -  
Don't make this a trip just for the kids. There can be a happy medium.

Choose a good place -  
Research the recreation area well and avoid complications later on.  
If you have young children, pick a place that you will be able to supervise kids with a limited amount of effort.

## While at Camp

Here's the most important piece of camping advice anyone can give you.  
Arrive at your campsite early so you'll have plenty of time to set up, get settled, and enjoy yourselves.

If you don't, you might as well stay home or check into a Holiday Inn.

A common mistake is to spend much of the day hiking, biking, or canoeing, trying to cram as much as possible into 24 hours. You may be having such a

good time that nobody wants to stop. But you're likely to pay later, with hungry, tired children, approaching darkness, and a mad scramble to make camp.

Remember when on a camping trip that being at your campsite is a major focus of the day.

### Choosing a Safe Site

That first hour in camp can be a dangerous one. Now that you're "home", busy pitching tents and unpacking, it's easy for parents to let their guard down.

Meanwhile, children are naturally excited, eager to see what's what. This is just the time when they can wander off or get into trouble.

Although the only surefire safeguard is adult supervision, all sites are not created equal.

Kids love to help choose, and should be given a say.

But while they've got their own agenda -  
good climbing trees, a path to explore  
- it's up to you to survey for potential hazards:

- Beware of cliffs, steep drop-offs, hills, rivers, lakes, and creeks. Some of these features, such as a creek, provide great entertainment as well as potential danger, so parents must make the call based on their children's age, temperament, and need for supervision.
  - With young children along, especially toddlers, check sites for trash, particularly glass and tin, and other debris they might put in their mouths, as well as sharp roots or stumps they might fall on.
  - Tent stakes and [guy lines](#) are easy to trip over. Remind kids not to run near them, and to watch out.

*To prevent accidents in the night,  
use phosphorescent paint to mark the top of corner pegs of tents, guylines,  
etc.*

- Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers need constant supervision when camping, just as they do at home.

For parents, there's no escaping their needs, even during vacations. One parent must often baby-sit while the other gets things done-one of many reasons why it's handy to camp with other adults.

- Establish rules and boundaries for kids of all ages. Young kids shouldn't go out of sight or away from the campsite. Older children may be allowed to visit designated areas-set a time for their return or for an adult to check on them. The buddy system is always a good idea. While campgrounds may seem like safe places full of friendly campers, remember that they're strangers. Even older children should be closely supervised.

### Kids and Campfires

Fires are like babies and toddlers.  
**Never leave them unattended.**



Even though you've already taught your children not to play with matches at home, camping trips are a good time for a refresher course. Open fires are irresistible for many kids. Not just for looking, but for building, setting, poking, even touching.

Different families take different approaches to fire. Older, responsible children may be allowed to help participate in all phases, including tending. Some children can be trusted to poke and prod a bit, but the issue can get sticky among siblings of different maturities.

Often the safest bet is a strict "hands- and sticks-off" policy.  
Set your own limits and stand by them.

While campfires are the highlight of many family camping trips, they're not always permitted. Some areas are too fragile, conditions may be too dry, or heavy usage and abuse of resources may have forced a ban. Even when fires are permitted, they're not always fun. On breezy evenings, as the song goes, smoke gets in your eyes, and kids may have little tolerance for the resulting sting.

Try going without-  
you may be pleasantly surprised by the different sights and sounds you'll see and hear, everything from wildlife to stars.  
If you still want a warm glow, try a candle.

! Teach older children proper building and handling techniques. Have young children stand a safe distance away from campfires and stoves. Make sure they're mindful of boots and shoes, too - prop up your legs and the soles may melt.

! Keep kids away from fire grates and watch for campfire sparks, which can ignite clothing.

! Don't let your kids throw things into the fire.

! Absolutely no roughhousing near fires.

! Sticks for roasting marshmallows and hot dogs are cooking tools, not swords.

Take them away if misused.

! Teach kids about the importance of putting out fires and monitoring the embers.

### Animal Proofing

Food should never be eaten or stored in tents, where it will attract wild visitors. It is important to stress this to kids who love to stash things away, munch, and produce enormous quantities of crumbs.

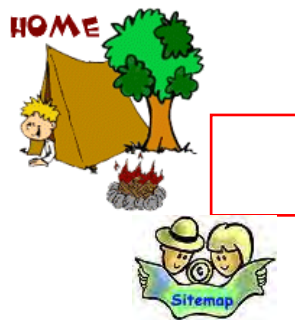
There's a fine line between laying down the law and scaring kids. One father told me about a well-meaning ranger who dropped by to warn about a hungry bear.

"It turned out that the bear hadn't been around in months," he said, "but it

was one of those things that rangers tell people. We wouldn't have left food out anyway, but the kids were up all night looking for the bear."

When you're car camping, keep food in the trunk-  
along with anything else you don't want your kids into.  
Teach your kids these safeguarding techniques; reassure them that all will  
be well.

With young, easily frightened children,  
don't mention bears,  
just the raccoons, squirrels, and mice.





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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Taking Your Dog Camping



[On the road](#) [At The Campsite](#) [Fleas & Ticks](#)

Camping with your dog can be a joyous experience for both owner and dog.

Dogs are thrilled with the new sights and sounds of a campsite.

Here are a few tips that may make camping with a dog safer and more enjoyable.

**Check with your destination to be sure whether dogs are permitted.**

**Pets are prohibited at many state and national parks.**

**Many private campgrounds allow dog but it is of utmost importance that you respect the other campers around you.**

## On the road

Once you are on the road, be aware that pets need regular breaks and can get carsick just like humans.

Fresh air is vital so leave the window down six inches or install a pet vent - a secure, adjustable grill that fits between the window frame and the glass. Pet vents are best suited for dogs.

Never leave your pet in the vehicle as they dehydrate more quickly than people.

Dogs generally travel well in the rear section of a station wagon or 4WD as long as they can see. Safety harnesses, available from pet shops, are advisable but not legally required.

Cats, however, need to be transported in a well-ventilated cat-carrier that's shielded from direct sun. The car's air conditioning must be used to keep a stable, comfortable temperature.

Feed your cat dry food before your trip to settle it's stomach



and provide dry food and water at rest stops.

Stop somewhere with space to let your dog have a run or to walk your cat on a lead. If you travel regularly your pet will learn

these breaks are their chance for a toilet break - but be responsible with any droppings by collecting them with a shovel, poop-scoop or a plastic bag. This applies to caravan parks and camping grounds as well.

Like children, pets enjoy having familiar items with them even when on holiday. Toys, food - even your pet's litter box - add comfort and security. This is particularly important for cats. Maintain the same behavioral patterns you keep at home. Keep feeding times regular and sleeping arrangements the same. If your dog requires a muzzle, bring it with you.

## At The Campsite

📍 For first timers try a mid-week camp or off season camp to get your dog used to camping without the hordes of other campers around.

📍 Consider a pre-traveling vet visit

- Get current on **ALL** shots and vaccinations and obtain a Rabies tag for your dogs collar.

*Many parks and campgrounds won't let you past the entrance station without it.*

- Consider a possible Lyme disease vaccine.

- Obtain a current copy of their records and vet's phone number.

- Get a proper dog license & ID tags for your dog-  
thier name, your name and address and phone number.

*If you have a cell phone that you're bringing while you're on vacation get your dog a tag with that number on it, not your home number, so in case your dog wanders off someone can get ahold of you.*

- Temporary tags may be a good idea - name and phone number of where you are staying.
- Microchips, tattoos and pet registries are also available.

It is always best to have both the tag form of identification with phone numbers AND a permanent identification that is part of the dog. The former allows anyone who can get hold of the dog and can read the ability to quickly notify you of where your dog is. (This is why I include my cell phone, since the dog is most likely to become separated from me when we are away from home.) The latter allows your dog to be identified in the case that he slips free of, or otherwise loses his collar.

- Bring medications and copy of prescriptions.

📌 Remember to create "down *time*" for your dog. Your dog needs some quiet time to relax just like you and the kids do.

📌 If you're **walking your dog** on a running or cycling path, curb (*sit/stay or close heel*) your pet as folks go trotting or wheeling on by.

It is important that both your pet and the public know that your dog will remain calm and controlled.

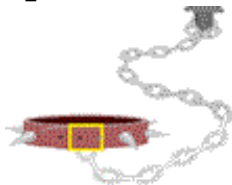
More importantly, you must be (1) physically able to restrain your dog (*or dogs*) in the presence of distractions, such as a running deer or squirrel, and (2) responsible enough to prevent the dog from being a nuisance to other people or animals.

Be certain before setting out -  
Make sure that the leash, snap, collar and buckle are in good

condition and will not break if the dog suddenly lunges after the rabbit that's been teasing him unmercifully from just ahead on the path.

Some people like to use retractable-type leashes to give their dogs more freedom. While these are fine where allowed, I've found that they more easily tangle around bushes or **other people.**

Dogs are required to be on-leash



on most maintained public trails.

In many places, the leash is required to be 6 feet or less in length. You should always respect these rules.

The reasons for this are numerous, I'll list a few examples here. Your dog might frighten others by running up to them. Even if she's friendly, people that are afraid of dogs might become agitated and get seriously injured indirectly through falling or backing into something in their fright. Your dog might chase other animals, scaring them, injuring them, or being killed or injured by them.

Carrying an additional collar and leash is a good idea in case of loss or breakage.

Probably the most important item I can stress is keeping your dog on the leash. It is for your dogs benefit as well as the environment's. Wild animals, (snakes, mountain lions, bears, coons, skunks, etc.) can hurt a curious or playful dog. There are also ticks, fleas, foxtails, burrs, etc. that can plague your dog. It is important that you protect him from them and vice-versa. Also, you can be cited in many public areas for not having your dog on a leash

## **Other Dogs on the Trail**

Not all dog owners are responsible with respect to their pets behavior on the trail. Some will even allow aggressive dogs off-leash. Encounters with these dogs can result in a fight between your animal and theirs, even if your dog is leashed, so be prepared to prevent this occurrence. Although I've personally not had a problem yet, a fellow hiker who has repeatedly run into this scenario offers the following advice: Always carry a can of Halt!, which is a mild pepper-spray, the exact same stuff many local letter-carriers have on their belts. It can be bought for around \$6.00 in many cycling stores, and is legal and definitely works. He points out that while he hates to hurt the dogs (*the owners are the ones that really need the correction*), his and his dogs' safety comes first, plus, it's more humane to stop a fight before it starts. The stuff has no lasting effects and can be washed out of the dog's eyes or whatever with water. Halt! has a range of only some 15' or so, and if there's a wind blowing, you or your dog can get a "back-blast" from it if you're not careful. He always makes every effort to resolve the issue in other ways but if he thinks an attack is coming (*you learn to read their body-language after awhile*), he uses it and just keeps going.

 **Clean up after your dog.**



A helpful suggestion is to stuff a paper towel tube with plastic grocery bags for easy cleanups. Make a mitt out of a bag, scoop the poop, and turn the bag inside out around your fist full of doggy dung. Tie the bag and toss it in a trash can.

Free poop bags for pets

[http://www.noworms.com/giveaway\\_form.cfm](http://www.noworms.com/giveaway_form.cfm)



It is imperative that you pick up after your dog.

No one wants to step in or near dog poop.

Don't believe that just because there is horse manure on the trail that it's OK to leave your dog's poop there. Manure very quickly decomposes and is generally seen as a more acceptable "trail hazard".

Any kind of irresponsible behavior on the part of dog owners is just one more reason that non-dog people will use to get trails and campsites closed to our four footed companions.

Always try to have the minimum (negative) impact on trail and campsites, wildlife and other trail users so that we can all continue to enjoy hiking and camping with our canine companions.

📍 Obedience train your dog.

You don't need to have a dog that is trained to fetch your slippers for you . . . rather one that behaves well and listens to basic commands like sit and stay.

📍 Never stake your dog out and leave it.

Walk your dog, give it FRESH water to drink couple times a day (*particles of nature tend to get in their bowl*).

- Bring their regular food bowls, food and treats.

To avoid problems, keep them on their regular schedule. Provide a cool comfortable environment for it while you're away swimming, hiking or what have you.

Try to get a site with some shade for your dog.

📍 Bring their chew toys and dog brush.

📍 Always bring their collar and leash.  
*Extras may be a good ideas.*

📍 For unexpected situations, pack [first aid items](#) for your dog

and also a towel.



## Pet First Aid Kit Checklist

- Your veterinarian's phone number
- Gauze to wrap wounds or muzzle animal
  - Adhesive tape for bandages
- Nonstick bandages (i.e., Telfa pads) to protect wounds or control bleeding Towels and cloth
  - Hydrogen peroxide (3 percent)
- Milk of Magnesia or activated charcoal to absorb poison (Be sure to get the advice of your veterinarian or local poison control center before inducing vomiting or treating an animal for poisoning.)
  - Large syringe without needle or eyedropper (to give oral treatments)
- Muzzle (soft cloth, rope, necktie or nylon stocking ) or use a towel to cover a small animal's head. Do not use in case of vomiting.
  - Stretcher (A door, board, blanket or floor mat)

I (*The Webmaster of The FUNdamentals of Camping*) advise that you contact your veterinarian immediately if your pet is injured or ill. First aid and the recommended first aid kit are not a substitute for veterinary treatment. However, knowing [basic first aid](#) could help save your pet's life.

Visit the site below for more first aid information and your pet(s)

Obtain the phone number of a vet in the area where you are staying.

📍 Make sure your dog is getting enough exercise. But consider the effect of activity and energy levels on your dog health.

📍 Be aware of how weather conditions effect your dog - heat, cold, rain etc.

Dogs don't tolerate heat well. Their bodies get hot and stay hot. During the summer heat, avoid outdoor games or jogging with your pet  
*(dogs can also get blisters on their feet from the hot pavement).*

Be sure your dog has access to shade and plenty of cold clean water.

**Signs that your dog is in danger include:**

reddening of the tongue and gums  
thickening of saliva  
vomiting


Move your pet to a cool room if you notice these symptoms. If your dog is staggering and noticeably distressed call your vet and give your pet a cool bath.

*National Safety Council*


 Make sure you have complete control over your dog at all times.

**Keep them on their leash.**

*(I own and bring my Pit Bull camping. One camping trip the campers next to us failed to keep their dog on a leash when one day the dog wandered into our campsite. My dog was on his leash and on his own property. Needless to say my Pit Bull defended his territory.)*

 Do not allow your dog to bark.

Frequent and continued barking disturbs other campers and the wildlife.

 Closely supervise your dog around children, other visitors and other dogs. *(see above)*

 Make use of designated dog walking areas.

 Give your dog time to adjust to their new surroundings.  
Give them time to rest.

 Watch that your dog doesn't get tangled around tent poles or

stakes, tables, trees, rocks etc.

📌 Remove any leftover food after your dog eats.  
This food could attract unwanted insects or wildlife.

📌 Be courteous of others while walking your dog.  
Keep your dog calm and controlled.

📌 Many books and other Websites insist that you "meet & greet" neighbors to know your dog better and realize they are not dangerous

*Some people don't want to meet your dog, not everyone is a "dog person".  
(could be allergic to dogs) !*

*If you're following campground rules which typically state your dog must be leashed  
at all times, there will be no chance meeting -  
and only TAME pets are allowed that don't pose a nuisance to others.  
Therefore a meet and greet is unnecessary*

*I don't bring my dog into anyone's campsite uninvited. I merely walk by and say  
"Hello!" if anyone is around.  
Because of the size and markings of my dog*



*people often strike up a conversation with me about him.  
If they do not we just keep on walking.  
My goal is that they merely be seen in a "non-threatening" light.*

*On another note -*

*Why do you go camping?*

*Is one of your reasons to be left alone to enjoy the peace and solitude of camping  
which the great outdoors brings?*

*I know I don't want people comming up to my campsite when I'm tring to relax from  
the city and the people who bother me knocking on my front door, etc . . .*

*- just my opinion*

 Consider your dogs sleeping arrangements.

 Be aware that your dog may have increased exposure to ticks and fleas.

Have the proper tick/flea collars, repellents or use Frontline applications.

Other diseases can also be obtained from wild animals and insects.

Advantage is excellent for fleas but does not get ticks. Frontline does a good job on both. These are both once a month applications. Some of the other products like Revolution and Sentinel are taken internally instead of applied to the skin. Also make sure that you keep up his heartworm prevention program. Many people now give heartworm preventative year-round.

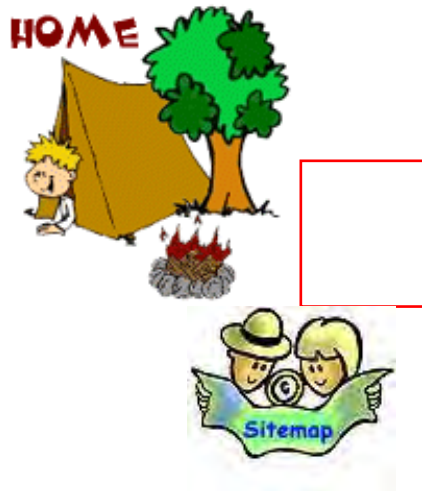
### **Ticks**

Ticks pose a real threat to your pets in the bush. The paralysis (or scrub tick) can easily kill your dog. To check for ticks run your fingers over your animal's head, ears, back, neck and legs feeling for small lumps. Extract ticks with tweezers by grabbing the tick as close to its head as possible, and pull gently, ensuring you do not leave the head.

Ask your vet for pre-trip advice.

**Snakes** A dog can't tell you when it's been bitten so if it starts behaving unusually (nausea, shock, weakness, respiratory distress) check for puncture marks. Around 75 per cent of snakebites occur around the face and neck. Once you have a confirmed snake bite, restrict all activity, keep the dog warm and seek urgent veterinary assistance.

If your dog should happen to get loose and runs off, leave your jacket or shirt the last place you saw the dog. Usually it will return there and lie down on your clothing.



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Camping Checklist



Preparation is the key to any successful venture into the great outdoors. Here is a checklist of frequently used camping gear to consult before you head out. As you and your family continue camping, you'll get a better idea of what you want to add or delete from this basic list.

### Tent And Bedding

[Tent](#)[Tarp](#)[Poles](#)[Stakes](#)

Extra Stakes

Rope

Mat for tent entrance

Tent repair kit

Ground Sheet

[rain fly](#)

### Sleeping

[Sleeping Bag](#)

Blankets

Mat / Air Mattress

Pillows

Air Pump

### Camping Basics

Flashlight

lantern (gas or electric)

BIC lighter

lantern fuel

spare lantern mantles

water

loung chair

clothesline / clothespins

### Recreational Camping

sport gear

[Fishing pole & gear](#)

### Personal

insect repellent

sunscreen

sunglasses

lip balm

handy wet wipes

tissue

washcloth

towel

sewing kit

toothpaste

toothbrush

deodorant

soap (in plastic case)

shampoo/conditioner

comb/brush

hair clips/bands

razor/shaving cream

toilet paper and plastic container

feminine products

shower shoes/flip flops

prescription medicines

scissors

### Medical

first aid kit

Tylenol, Advil, Aspirin

Tums

antibiotics cream

tweezers for splinters

antiseptic, Band-Aids

allergy medicine

pocket tissues

snakebite kit

calamine lotion

### Camping Fire

firewood

newspaper *(or other firestarters)*

matches

kindling/starter sticks

campfire permit

fire extinguisher

butane lighter *(refillable)*

### Clothing

sweater

jacket

sweats pants / shirt

jeans

underwear

swimsuit

socks

t-shirts

tank top

hat/visor

thermals

shorts

pajamas

hiking boots

sneakers

extra pair shoes

sandals / Flip-flops

bandanna

sunglasses

### Camp Kitchen

block/bags of ice

ice chest / cooler(s)

storage container (food)

frozen insulator

[stove](#)[propane/fuel](#)

matches/lighter

disposable butane lighter

charcoal

[dutch oven](#)/tin can stove/box oven/etc

campfire grill / BBQ grill

cooking oil / Pam spray

fold-up table

pot holders

paper towels

aluminum foil (**Heavy-duty**)

ziplock bags

skewers

tablecloth

5 gallon water cooler(s) / purification tablets

folding stands for cooler and stove

Fishing License & bait  
books, cards  
games, toys, etc  
bikes/helmets  
binoculars  
canoe or boat  
life jackets

### Children

travel games  
games and toys  
rainy day games  
books  
paper  
pencils and crayons  
buckets and shovels  
Frisbees  
magazines

### Tools

mallet or hammer  
shovel  
axe  
Multi Tool  
saw  
dust pan / whisk broom  
duct tape/electrical tape  
bungie cords/straps

### Miscellaneous

[hammock](#)  
cell phone/charger  
watch  
battery-operated radio  
travel clock  
camera and film / memory cards for digital camera's  
video camera  
binoculars  
tiki torches  
candles  
compass  
battery re-charger  
Extra batteries / bulbs  
compass  
map(s)  
money, credit card, ID  
drivers license  
day pack/fanny pack

### Cooking Utensils

spatchula  
tongs  
big spoon  
cork screw  
bottle opener  
cutting knife  
can opener  
Pots / Pans  
Knives  
Wooden Spoons  
Plates / paper plates  
Bowls  
Cups  
Cutlery  
Coffee Pot  
plastic silverware  
thermos

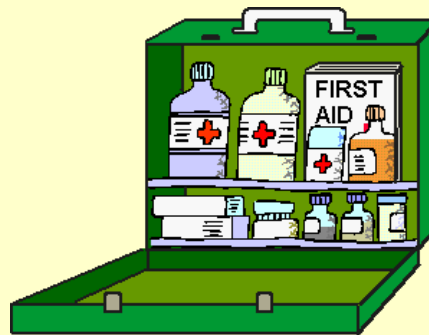
### Before You Leave

lock doors  
close / lock windows  
turn off lights  
adjust thermostat  
hold mail  
leave an itinerary  
water plants  
pet arrangements  
turn off computer

### Cleaning Up

plastic trash bags  
Plastic Bags / Ziplocks  
Washing Up Liquid (*biodegradable version*)  
dish pan  
dish towel  
dish soap  
sponge  
pot scrubber

## Basic First Aid



The following list is only a suggestion of some of the supplies you should consider for your first aid kit. You should personalize your kit to meet your needs, activities and situations. The key to a good first aid kit is its usability. What supplies to include and how much of each item should be based upon your individual needs.



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal medications                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Triangular bandages                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roll bandages                           | <a href="#">Misc. Band Aides/bandages</a>                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive tape                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-acids (Tums, Rolaides)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antiseptic wipes                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibiotic cream                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sterile gauze pads                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Aspirin/Ibuprofen/Tylenol/Naproxin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton swabs                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrogen Peroxide                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tweezers                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Ace bandages                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety pins                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunburn lotion                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scissors                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Burn ointment                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Bee sting kit</a>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Snake bite kit</a>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sinus medications                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Eye drops                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tissues                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Poison ivy cream/cleansers         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Bug repellent</a>           | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat/cold packs                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Sunscreen</a>               | <input type="checkbox"/> Small flashlight                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notepad/pen                             | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Latex gloves</a>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sterile compresses                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibacterial soap                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Splinting materials</a>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal information/contact person     | <input type="checkbox"/> Coins for emergency phone calls    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feminine products                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibiotic soap                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ipecac                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Butterfly bandages                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Razor blades                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Twine                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Resealable Plastic bags</a> | <input type="checkbox"/> Mole skin for blisters             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small bottle of water                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Road flares                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blanket                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">First aid manual</a>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other personal needs                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail clippers                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small mirror                            | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">CPR Shields</a>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Oral Rehydration Salts</a>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Mineral Ice</a>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Irrigation Syringes</a>     | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Iodine Ointment</a>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soap Scrub Sponges                      | <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Eye Cups</a>           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Tincture of Benzoin</a>     |   |

- \*Take a First Aid class and a CPR class - keep current on this information
- \*Keep supplies in a well marked, durable, waterproof container
  - \*Keep the contents organized
- \*Know how to use everything in your first aid kit
- \*Inspect content often, re-supply as needed
  - \*Keep readily available at all times

Get more descriptive information on a First Aid Kit including First Aid Response Techniques by [Clicking Here!](#)

## "Kid" List

- Off to the Beach
- Recreation Box
- Baby Gear
- Basic Clothes Packing Guideline for 3 Day Trip
- Children's Camping or Nature Stories

### BEACH STUFF

If your camping trip includes a trip to the beach you won't want to forget to pack ...

- fishing poles
- tackle box
- worms/bait
- beach sheet
- "swimming suits
- beach towels
- beverage cooler
- "floaty" toys (inflatable water toys)

*Label these floaty toys. It's amazing how many other kids have identical floaty toys.*

sand toys

*Label your sand toys with permanent magic marker. This saves on a lot of "sandbox" wars!*

*A mesh bag is great to keep these toys in. This can be dunked in the lake to rinse off the sand before it goes back in the car.*

life jackets

### RECREATION BOX

*an 18 gallon Rubbermaid container*

*These containers make great tables next to our beach chairs!*

Take most of this for "just in case" or for those rainy days in the case of the travel games, because actually the kids are just busy having fun exploring.

- A few of the items
  - bug jars,
  - football or big round ball
- matchbox type cars/trucks for playing in the gravel or dirt
- travel games
  - Yahtzee
  - cards
  - Monopoly
- Reading around the fire - rain or shine!
  - bubbles
  - Roller Skates
  - Roller Blades

water pistols  
water balloons

**Bringing an infant?**

**Baby Supplies**

In addition to Baby's clothes:  
infant seat"  
If you have a toddler you are potty training,  
bring the "little white potty chair" along (and  
tissue).  
Depending on where you are camping, you may  
want mosquito netting.  
small inflatable baby pool.  
A hollow medicine spoon

- \_\_\_ baby food
- \_\_\_ diapers and wipes
- \_\_\_ bottles and formula
- \_\_\_ bibs
- \_\_\_ spoons
- \_\_\_ ointments
- \_\_\_ booster / high-chair
- \_\_\_ stroller
- \_\_\_ toys and books
- \_\_\_ favorite toy
- \_\_\_ blankets
- \_\_\_ crib / play pen
- \_\_\_ stuffed animals
- \_\_\_ pacifier
- \_\_\_ wash tub

**Itinerary**

trip: \_\_\_\_\_

dates: \_\_\_\_\_

when: \_\_\_\_\_

days:

S M T W T F S

S M T W T F S

S M T W T F S

where: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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campsite: \_\_\_\_\_

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closest hwy/town: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

directions: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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important phone numbers:

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Tell someone of your plans

Give details of where you are going and when you expect to return, give directions and possible alternative roads that you may take, provide cell phone numbers, vehicle description and license plate numbers, hand-held radio channel and codes that you will use, and provide local authority phone numbers (State Police, Game & Fish Commission, Sheriff Dept, etc.) for the county or area that you will be in.

If you want to customize this list to meet your family's needs, copy and paste this entire list to your word processor.

Then delete what your family doesn't need. Add the special items your family always takes. Save your file.

You are encouraged to print this page for your own personal camping needs!


Bookmark this page in case you lose your printed list!



Now I know where our list always is!



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 <b>RECYCLE-A-BIKE</b>	Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City
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 <b>RECYCLE-A-BIKE</b>	<b>BIKE SALE</b> 
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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

Picking, caring for and Using a Tent



*A two-man pup tent does not include two men or a pup.*



[\[How much to spend\]](#) [\[What kind\]](#)

[\[Basic Styles\]](#)

[\[A-Frames\]](#) [\[Dome or Pop Tents\]](#) [\[Hoop Tents\]](#) [\[Bivy\]](#) [\[Cabin Tents / Family-style Tents\]](#) [\[Backpacking Tents\]](#)  
[\[Shape\]](#) [\[Features to Look For\]](#) [\[Size\]](#) [\[Weight\]](#) [\[Ventilation\]](#) [\[Three Season Tent\]](#) [\[Four Season tent\]](#) [\[Tent Fabric\]](#) [\[Tent Poles\]](#) [\[Workmanship\]](#) [\[Waterproofing\]](#)

[\[Set-up\]](#) [\[Color\]](#)

[\[The Fly\]](#)

[\[Additional Tips\]](#) [\[Ground Sheets\]](#) [\[Washing Your Tent\]](#)

[\[Care & Maintenance\]](#) [\[Staking Your Tent\]](#)

Sleeping in the countryside, away from city lights, out under the stars on a clear night is simply spectacular.

However, waking up in the middle of the night during a downpour can be quite miserable.

Just waking up in the morning covered with dew is bad enough.

**There is a solution to this problem:  
put a roof over your head.**

Your campsite bed is made;  
you've geared up with  
pads, mats, sleeping bags, air mattresses, sheets, blankets, comforters and pillows  
to get a good night's sleep.

Now you need to insure that cozy campground slumber with an appropriate tent to shield you from the wind, the sun and the rain and also to protect you from unfriendly outdoor pests like flies, mosquitoes and no-seeums.

## **HOW MUCH SHOULD I SPEND ON A TENT, OR TENTS?**

*Mama always said,  
"always buy the best you can afford".  
That advice is as good as ever when it comes to tents. However that is not  
to say you have to break the bank.*

***Obviously there must be some difference to justify the price.***

Let's put it this way.

If we were climbing Mount Everest, then we would choose the \$700.00 tent. It would stand up to the high winds, and the material would not shred because of those same winds in the extreme cold. However, if we are taking some young scouts for a weekend camping trip in the park, the \$29.99 tent should stand up to those elements very nicely.

You need to think of your tent as an investment.  
It's much better to spend an extra amount on a quality tent  
than to skimp.

A cheap tent, may work all right in good weather, but as soon as  
the wind rises and the skies open up, forget it.

You'll be miserable.

In many cases, a good tent can make a nightmare scenario  
downright cozy.

So spend as much as you can afford, but always go with quality.

## **What kind of tent?**

## Determine the Purpose of the Tent

- 📌 If being used for family camping--consider comfort, space and ventilation
- 📌 If backcountry camping--consider weight, size and durability

Tents today come in all [shapes and sizes](#) to meet a variety of camping needs and weather situations.

There are a few things to consider when purchasing a new tent.

### Floor

The floor should be the most water-resistant part of the tent. Because you are putting pressure on the floor of the tent, you can draw water into the tent through the fabric. This is why most floors are heavily coated with urethane for waterproofness.

### Things to Consider:

Look for a tent with a one piece floor, it's less likely to seep water than a floor with seams.

#### **BATHTUB FLOOR:**

This means that the floor actually wraps up along the sides. Generally for 4-6 inches. This eliminates a lot of seams and chances for leaks.

Most tents now come with a "Bathtub" like bottom. This is generally a heavier duty material than the sidewalls, and usually is waterproof. This does not alleviate the need for putting now a tarp under your tent, which is still a good idea. The "Bathtub" like bottom does remove the need for trenching around tents. Trenching occurred years ago when tents had no bottoms, or had canvas bottoms that did not repel water. The trenches directed the water away from the tent. The tent bottoms of today have earned the name "Bathtub" bottoms, because the material used to make the bottoms usually goes 2-4 inches above floor level.

***This makes for a nice waterproof seal.***

*Although many people have stopped using bottom tarps because of these newer bottom designs, it is still a good idea. It is another layer between the possible damp/wet ground and your tent floor. Not only is this potentially warmer, but it helps keep the tent cleaner. You*

*might see these advertised at footprints. This is because you do not want your tarp sticking out from the sides around the tent. If this occurs, then rain water would collect on the tarp possibly make its way under your tent.*

### **Polyweave:**

- This is the same stuff you use to cover your trailer or boat with.
- Floors made of this material are good at repelling water but can tear easily on sharp rocks.
- They are heavier than nylon floors and are thicker so tents with polyweave floors don't pack as small or as light as tents with nylon floors.
- This floor costs considerably less to make than a nylon floor with a light urethane coating, yet provides better waterproofness.

### **Nylon:**

- Nylon floors come in many different weights and are a sometimes hard to differentiate.
- The best way to differentiate is by touching the fabric on different tents.
- Better tents use 3 ounce (per square foot), 70 Denier (a measurement of weave) nylon taffeta or greater or 210 Denier Oxford nylon (a bit heavier).
- These materials are far more abrasion resistant than lighter weight nylon. Untreated nylon is not water repellent so it must be treated with urethane (see treatments).
- When treated with enough urethane a nylon floor can become watertight.

### **Treatments:**

- The floor is the part of the tent that requires the highest degree of waterproofness.
- Treatments are urethane based and can be applied in two ways.
- One is a liquid form that is poured onto the fabric and a knife-edge is rolled over the fabric to distribute it evenly. A single pass can yield waterproofness to up to 35 PSI of water pressure. The more passes, the more waterproof the fabric becomes.
- The second method is to laminate one sheet of urethane to the fabric. This method costs much less and provides a greater degree of waterproofness up to 200 PSI.
- Regardless of the method used, the floor fabric should be treated to a minimum of

100 PSI. Anything less and you may need to wear a life jacket before falling asleep.

- The treated side of the fabric should be on the inside of the tent, because friction with loose dirt and small rocks will eventually deteriorate the treatment.

### Construction:

A factor not to be overlooked is the construction.

- A floor made of the most waterproof fabric will still leak if there are seams on the floor which are not properly sealed.
- Many companies tape their floor seams, so as to avoid having the consumer seam seal the floor themselves.

However, most companies fail to tape the corners that are prone to leakage. If the corners are not properly sealed, take the time to do it yourself.

### Groundsheets:

If you could spend five bucks and 15 minutes to ensure a long and happy life, would you?

Of course you would!

And one of the best things you can do for a tent is to use a groundsheet religiously.

Although the bottom of your tent is made of reinforced material that is thicker than either its [rain fly](#) or tent walls, the forest floor is an abrasive place. To prevent accidental punctures from rocks and the like, lay a plastic ground cover under the tent's floor.

Most tents on the market now have a fully sewn in groundsheet, often with what's called a 'bath-tub' floor design. This is where the groundsheet extends further up the side of the tent to eliminate any water penetration from the side seams.

Mountain tents commonly use a groundsheet material made from neoprene coated nylon, which is extremely waterproof and durable but heavier than the normal PU coated nylon groundsheets. In the cheaper end of the tent market a polythene material is used as it is robust, waterproof and inexpensive but it is heavy and noisy!

- Thin polyethylene sheeting from a hardware store is a lightweight, inexpensive option to go under your tent.
- Old shower curtains make great ground clothes.

They should not extend beyond the edge of the tent; otherwise they will collect moisture which could enter your tent.

This groundsheet should be cut to fit the shape of the tent floor-as big, but no bigger. A groundsheet that peeks out from the edges of the tent will channel water underneath, and no degree of waterproofing will stop water from seeping inside. You can buy material for groundsheet at both outdoor-equipment and hardware stores.



Plastic from hardware stores is perfectly fine and often cheaper.

## Making your own groundsheet

For materials you'll need a large sheet of waterproof material, scissors, a marker, some duct tape and grommets (optional).

**Step 1:** Lay the uncut groundsheet out and set up your tent on top of it (without rainfly and vestibule). Stake the tent out tautly.

**Step 2:** Using the marker, trace the outline of the tent.

**Step 3:** Trim the excess, following an invisible line that is 2 inches inside the line you traced. This is to prevent any overhanging fabric, which will direct rain underneath your tent's floor. This is very important! When your trimming is complete, no portion of the groundsheet should extend beyond the footprint of the tent.

**Optional Step 4:** If you plan on using nylon (a good choice because of its light weight and durability), disregard Step 3 and cut exactly along the traced line. Then fold over the edge of the groundsheet all the way around and sew a 2-inch hem to prevent the fabric from fraying.

**Optional Step 5:** Instead of cutting uniformly 2 inches inside your tracing, leave the corners on the original line and arc the sides inward. Then attach grommets to the corners. By looping the grommets over the tent pole tips, you've firmly attached the groundsheet. Plus you can use it as a pack cover in the rain, a cooking shelter or a vestibule extension.

**Optional Step 6:** If you use a shower curtain, polyethylene or Tyvek, cut long strips of duct tape in half, lengthwise. Then carefully fold the strips over the edges of the groundsheet. This will protect the edges from tearing or shredding.

Make sure the [rain fly](#) is an adequate size, covering most of the tent with an extended section at the door to allow entry without soaking the inside of the tent.

Make sure the tent is big enough to accommodate all the campers  
**plus a place to stow their gear.**

Particular circumstances, like snow camping, beach camping, or backpacking, may call for specialized tents, accessories or considerations.

Let's look further into the aspects of selecting a proper tent.

## Basic Styles

Understanding tent lingo has become as complicated as translating at a United Nations conference.

Here are a few definitions to help guide you through this dilemma.

Keep in mind the three basic components of a tent: [the poles](#), the canopy, and the [rain fly](#), the latter two of which are separate in a two-walled tent and combined in a single-walled tent.

Additionally, most tents come equipped with [stakes](#) and a stuff sack.

### **Single-walled versus double-walled tents.**

Traditional tents have a nylon body, which may be covered by a polyurethane-coated [rain fly](#).

However, modern fabric technology has resulted in single-walled tents made from waterproof/breathable material that does not require a [rain fly](#) for protection against moisture.

Generally, double-walled tents are heavier than their single cousins, but are also less expensive. The advantage of double-walled tents is that they breathe well (the canopy and [fly](#) have several inches of space between them, or the [fly](#) can be removed completely), with less condensation forming on the interior walls.

Also, if you are accident-prone, a punctured [rain fly](#) can be repaired or replaced, leaving the main tent intact.

[Rain flies](#) that have lost their waterproofness can also be replaced with less cost than is required to buy a new single-walled tent.

## Shape

What shape tent you purchase is just one of the many factors involved in finding the tent that is just right for you.

The shape of the tent, of course, determines a lot, but you will also find that even if you are in a car, the [weight](#), [size](#), [ventilation](#), tent materials, tent [poles](#), [workmanship](#), [waterproofing](#),

[set up](#) and [color](#) will also matter.

For example, if you drive a Geo Metro, it is doubtful you'll want to fill your car with a [full-sized cabin tent](#).

*Evaluating tent designs can be a little daunting;  
many will have similar features,  
but look completely different when erected.  
Most tent designs, however, are variations on the following five  
configurations.*

## A- frames



The A-frame tent is becoming outmoded as newer, sexier-looking [dome tents](#) take over the market.

Experienced campers, however, swear by their reliability in the face of bad weather-in spite of their old-fashioned design, which features two sloping sides falling away from a rigid center pole, a design that catches the wind but sheds water quickly.

This design offers less interior space for the size than more contemporary designs but offers more interior height.

A-frames are often lighter in weight than domes because there are often fewer [poles](#).

While most A-frames require [stakes](#), some modified A-frames are freestanding.

A-frames tend to cost less than their [dome-shaped](#) cousins, and this may be only one of the reasons to choose this tried-and-true design.

## Domes



This style of tent is by far the most popular recreational tent around. It offers plenty of floor space and is designed to ride out heavy winds.

Are more aerodynamic and stable, with a sleeker profile to shed water and wind effectively.

Dome Tents are generally easy to set up. You usually slide 2 or 3 [poles](#) made of aluminum or fiberglass, through sleeves on the tent and then pull them up to the round shape and put the ends in little "corners" of fabric.

The [poles](#) come in several sections and are attached with interior cord

Dome tents are preferable if you will be in an area that is prone to high winds because the shape makes for little risk of collapsing.

Dome tents usually are packed into one bag for both the tent and [poles](#).

Some manufacturers color-code the sleeves, and this helps. In bad weather, having practiced pitching your tent beforehand will be a dress rehearsal if you have to do it quickly.

The drawback of dome tents is that they usually aren't as tall or roomy and the floor plan isn't as efficient as the standard A-frame rectangle for sleeping. The sloping sides of the dome mean that you will hunch over a lot, even in large tents that have standing room directly under the center of the dome.



Their crisscrossing [poles](#), producing a hexagonal, octagonal, or similar geometrical shape, make them extremely rigid - therefore good in windy conditions.

Octagonal? Hexagonal?

[Sleeping bags](#) and duffels are rectangles, why would you want a Hex shaped tent?  
A hex is stronger in wind and snow.

Square tents are much easier to organize and things just plain fit better.

*- just my opinion*

Domes are classified as freestanding, meaning you can pitch them without using [guylines](#) (ropes tied to trees and other supports) and [stakes](#), attaching these after the tent is up.

Freestanding tents also offer the added convenience of portability; you can set them up in one location and move them-in one piece-to another *(within a reasonable distance)* if your first site is too rocky or uneven.

"[Freestanding](#)" does not mean leaving your tent unstaked.

At the very least, staking is required to help pull the [rain fly](#) taut (and therefore rainproof) at midpoints on each side of the tent.

Bear in mind that an unstaked, freestanding tent can become airborne when hit with a good gust of wind.

Some tents are made of rain-resistant material, but many are constructed with light, breathable nylon and are protected by rain flies.

The great thing about a good dome is the way they take the rain. The secret is the fly. A good fly will have enough overhang to let you keep the windows open in a pretty good rain, this adds to comfort.

Also hidden behind the fly is a tent that is largely mesh fabric. Air is able to come up under the fly and pass in and out of the tent offering ventilation and privacy. This is important both to keep cool on summer nights and to release moisture in cooler seasons.

A good fly will come down to near the ground and can be staked out so that a straight falling rain will never touch the actual tent!

## Hoop Tents



This tent design may have been the originator to the more adaptable and improved dome tent.

Designed for use by serious backpackers  
(*and others who opt to shed the weight of heavier tents*),  
the hoop tent is a usually cylindrical design with curved sidewalls.

Hoop tents are lightweight because they use only two [poles](#), but are a bit less spacious than [domes](#) or [A-frames](#).

These tents aren't as rugged in high winds, rain, or snow as A-frames or Domes, but their shape is highly efficient for both weight and floor space.

Hoop tents generally incorporate three arched frame stays, which allow for nice roomy doors and high ceilings.

Some of these tents feature a fold-back covering that permits occupants  
(*in pleasant weather*)  
to see the sky through extra-big panels of mosquito netting.

Although this design can withstand high winds, some models with sloped entrances encourage rain to migrate inside.

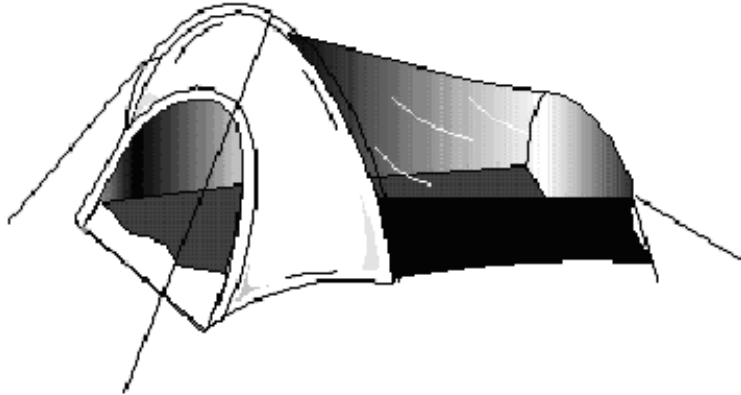
Hoop tents are for weight-conscious backpackers.

## The Bivvy

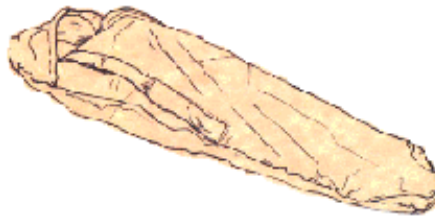
## (Tent and Sack)

Bivouacs come in two styles:

- 📌 a tent version, which is essentially a hoop tent;



- 📌 and a bivvy sack, which encloses a single person like a cocoon.



Bivouac (or bivvy) sacks are one-man "tents" that typically exist in the domain of the serious hiker.

These "tents" resemble narrow tubes that have the unfortunate reputation of sealing in body moisture because the walls of the tent aren't allowed to "breathe" as they do in other tent designs.

Bivvies often have a large hoop that supports the front end, keeping the fabric off your head.

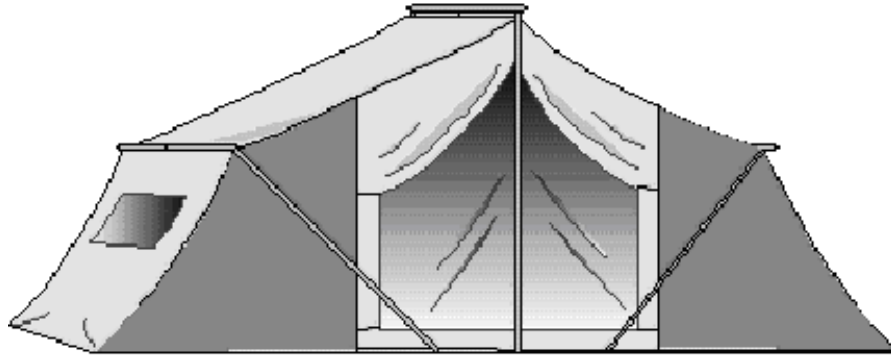
Besides the breathability problem, there is also no room for camping gear inside the tent; equipment left outside could be soaked in a downpour.

In this case, you'll have to cover your equipment with some sort of rainproofing-in the form of plastic garbage bags or under a rain poncho, or tarpaulin.

"Bivvy" sacs have no supporting ribs.

In effect, the bivvy sac is a form of sleeping bag cover that offers some waterproofing and wind protection (not insulation). There is even less room inside these types of "tents," which have the unfortunate nickname-and rightly so-of "body bags."

## Family- Sized Tents



Last, but not least, are family-sized tents designed to accommodate up to six people. These are made more for car campers; they're less practical for backpackers, cyclists, or those traveling by canoe.

These weighty monsters are really more like the equivalent of a log cabin with apartment-size rooms and "windows"; they weigh between 20 and 30 pounds.

Family tents are multiroom tents designed for those who plan to stay at the same site for longer periods of time.

Their large, square designs have high ceilings and vertical walls. They have plenty of space for cots, chairs and coolers.



*Large, six- to eight-person family tents that open with screened sides are a delight for summer camping.*

Family-style tents, for lack of a better word, come in a variety of styles descended from the canvas designs of my youth.

There are umbrella styles, cottage designs, cabin tents, modified dome designs, and others that defy simple description.

The main difference between these tents and their forebears are the fabrics-nylon walls, taffeta floors, and, occasionally, canvas poplin roofs-and the superstructure, which usually consists of aluminum tubing.

Family tents are bulkier, heavier, and take a little more time to pitch than dome tents.

Most are not free-standing, so you must [stake](#) down the corners before erecting



them.

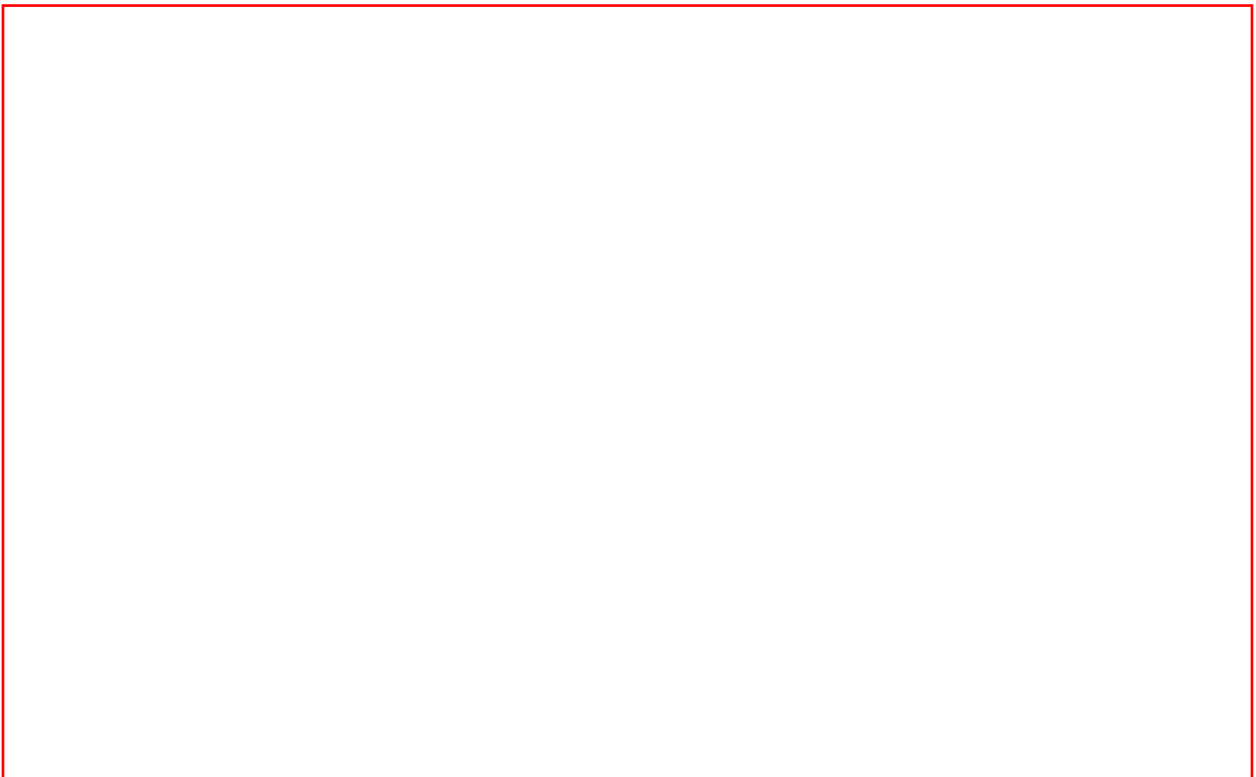
Family tents aren't as stalwart in a strong wind as dome designs, but they are roomier for a given floor space, have more standing room, and usually offer better ventilation.

Some come with room dividers, awnings, or additional rooms that can be added with zippers.



If you have a large family or expect to spend a lot of time in your tent, a family-style tent would be a good choice.

The dome style is more convenient for shorter trips, or on vacations where you're moving camp every couple of days.



### **Canvas Tent**

I have had plenty of experience with both dome and cabin tents and my personal opinion is that either one is fine for most use and it is really a matter of personal

preference.  
I've been more than happy with our cabin tent!

## Backpacking Tents



There are many specialty backpacking tents on the market, most of them based on a modified dome or geodesic design with arcing [poles](#). Some are as complicated as lunar landing modules. Designed to stand up under harsh conditions, they are typically made for sleeping, keeping your gear dry, and little else.

But unless you are considering bicycle or canoe camping, or, of course, backpacking, they don't provide enough room to be a good choice for families.

### Features to Look For

## Consider Quality of Other Features

### [Stitching and seams](#)

#### Zippers

Look for tents with nylon-coil zippers. They're less prone to breaking than metal zippers, and are lighter. Examine a tent's zippers carefully: Sticky or recalcitrant zippers may be a sign of future trouble.

**Broken Zippers? [Click Here](#)**

### [Window and Door mesh](#)

#### [Flooring](#)

#### Tie Downs

## Stakes

### Size

*How big does the tent need to be?*

*Determine the Size and Weight*

*What type of activity*

*How many people*

*How much gear to store in tent*

*Tent sizes do not include room for gear storage.  
Consider purchasing a larger tent for this purpose*

If it's just you and your spouse, then you obviously don't need to get a monster tent that's made for 8 people.

On the other hand, if you're camping with the Brady Bunch, then you will need a larger tent.

Also, will you need to keep any campers separate?

If so, there are tents that have two or three "rooms".

These tents are divided into two or three separate living areas, and they are perfect if you want to keep girls in one room and boys in another, or parents in one room and kids in another.

#### **Tip**

Before heading out on your first camping trip with a child, let them take naps or spend the night in your tent at home. The claustrophobic environment takes some getting used to, and it's best for both you and the child to accustom yourselves to a tent at home rather than the outdoors where it is darker and you might bother other campers.

Another thing to consider when deciding on the size of your tent is whether or not you plan on storing any gear inside the tent. If you want to keep the cooler and other items in the tent, then get a tent that's rated for 1 or 2 more people higher than you normally would.

Some tents even have a separate "dining room". This is usually a screened-in area for eating and lounging.

**Tents are rated for people sleeping . . .  
period!**

**If you want to have your clothing duffel etc. with you . . .  
add to the head count, start with at least 50% more**

The most important thing to look for in a camping tent is roominess.

Are you tall?

Is there enough room to stretch out to your full length when you are in your sleeping bag?

What about headroom?

Do you have enough room to sit up comfortably?

Do you intend to spend a lot of time in your tent?

Decide how much room is important to you before purchasing a tent.

Tent manufacturers tend to overestimate the number of people their tents can accommodate.

If a tent claims it holds one to two people, it usually means exactly that (*holds one to two people*) and with little room for much else.

Two people will be a tight fit without their gear, and one person will fit with plenty of room for clothes, food, etc.

Keep that in mind when considering how much you want your tent to hold.

- Cabin tents are big with high ceilings and large windows. Multi-room models are available.
- [Dome tents](#) are smaller, stable and better in varying weather conditions. They are easy to setup and take down

## Weight

When you are making your tent wish list, remember that you will be responsible for how the tent reaches the campground, be it a primitive site in a state forest or a fully-equipped site at the nearest KOA. For backpackers, the most important feature of a tent is its weight. Car campers, on the other hand, are more interested in roominess and comfort. Even so, carrying more tent than the camping trip calls for can be almost as much of a mistake as not having an adequate tent. Some of the larger family tents weigh in excess of 30 pounds.

Don't purchase a huge, bulky, heavy tent if your time in the tent is limited to the eight hours you will be sleeping in it. If your tent will be used only for the "rest" half of R&R, you might want to look into one of the less expensive small family camping tents.

However, if you head out on a camping trip in a heavy duty vehicle intending to set up a base camp for several days or more, the larger tents may be worth the bulk as well as the price.

Many campers (*like us*) set up in state parks, particularly those on lakes or the ocean, and live in the campground for a week or more.

## Ventilation

This is another important feature to look for when shopping for a tent. On hot, buggy nights there is nothing worse than being stifled in a poorly ventilated tent.

Many tents these days offer plenty of no-see-um netting for cross ventilation as well as [protection from bugs](#).

Well ventilated tents also have fewer problems with condensation build-up inside the tent than tents sealed up tight. If you are planning only cold weather camping, this feature won't be necessary.

Are you a spring/summer/fall tent-user, or do you like to extend camping into the winter as well?

Do you think you'll take your tent primarily on backpacking, rafting, sea kayaking, or car camping trips?

Or do you enjoy heading up into the mountains where you'll be exposed to the elements:

snow, wind, rain, hail, sleet, and all those fun experience-builders?

## Three Season Tent

Most tents can be classified as three-season. In other words, their construction makes them comfortable from spring through fall. There are also tents that are almost entirely no-see-um netting for ultimate ventilation and which are perfect for camping in the summer, particularly in the South and Southwest.

On the other hand, if you intend to hike in every season, a good [rain fly](#) will compensate in cold weather for the extra ventilation needed in hot weather.

Three-season tents have more mesh, lighter [poles](#) and fabrics, and aren't as heavy-duty.

Three-season also means less ca\$h.

## Four Season Tent

Tents built for four-season use usually have very little ventilation and sometimes feature a cook hole in the floor so that you can cook inside your tent.

Four-season tents theoretically keep you warm or cool, whichever the case may be, year-round.

Four-season tents usually have stronger [poles](#), heavier fabrics, less mesh, and remain sturdy in the wind and snow.

They also have a little more room for gear and cooking.

Basically, the more weather and snow you camp out in, the stronger your tent needs to be.

Snow = a four-season tent.

No snow or little snow = a three-season tent.

## Tent Fabric

Most tents are made of strong but lightweight nylon taffeta or rip stop nylon, which weighs approximately 2 ounces per square yard. Some of the bigger tents use coated polyester or cotton poplin canvas, which weighs a good deal more.

The floors and flies are usually coated with polyurethane or another moisture-repellent substance to prevent moisture from passing from the ground into the tent. Although the body of a tent is often left untreated to increase the transfer of respiration and perspiration through the tent's walls, it is not unusual to wake up in a damp tent. Moisture can gather beneath sleeping pads or air mattresses (but not cots since they are raised above the floor). Large and airy tents have less of a problem this way because of the greater circulation of air throughout the tent. Some tents offer a double-roof construction, which further decreases unwanted condensation. I have spent a number of sleepless nights in tents that dripped continually from the ceiling.

- Polyester withstands extended exposure to the sun
  - Nylon is lighter weight
  - Canvas is durable but very heavy

## Tent Poles

Quality is important  
Fiberglass poles are durable  
Aluminum poles are lightweight

In the past few years, tent poles have evolved from unyielding aluminum to shock-corded poles of fiberglass or aluminum (except in the case of some of the larger, family tents, which still use rigid aluminum poles). These new poles are threaded in segments over elastic (shock) cord that allows the user merely to snap the poles into shape rather than piece them together.

**SHOCKCORDED POLES:** This means that a bungee cord runs through each pole assembly. This keeps the pole together so you don't have to hunt for pieces. As the

poles sections slip together the cord holds them together so they can be handled as a single pole.

### **Tip**

**Never shake out your shock-corded poles to snap them together. The violent action causes nicks to form at the joints that will tear your tent pole sleeves.**

When dismantling the tent, the segments are pulled apart and folded compactly.

There is still some controversy as to whether fiberglass is superior to aluminum when it comes to designing tent poles. Fiberglass is less expensive and more flexible than aluminum. It does not require pre-bending or any special attachments. It also provides a better packing size when folded. Its major drawbacks are that it is affected by weather and can break into splinters and must be replaced. Aluminum is more likely to bend and can be splinted when it breaks. Durability is one of aluminum's main advantages along with the fact that it is easily replaced.

### **Aluminum:**

Aluminum poles are the standard for high-end tents.

Good quality aluminum poles are strong, light and can run well over \$200 for a replacement set.

### **Don't loose them.**

Thick poles come with mountaineering and 4 season tents. Save the weight and get thinner poles if you will not be camping in heavy winds and snow.

They are light, flexible and can withstand the cold.

The quality of aluminum poles vary, but most poles are aircraft grade aluminum which are lighter and less bulky while providing increased strength.

Diameters range from 6 mm to 15 mm. The larger diameter is heavier, stronger and less flexible, thus more stable under high winds. Most backpacking tents use 8.5 mm to 9.5 mm. As a general rule if your tent has only one pole intersection, your poles should be 9.5 mm.

If your tent is higher than 5 feet tall, you need a pole diameter of at least 10.5 mm.

Some companies color code their aluminum poles to make the tent easier to set up.

### **Fiberglass:**

Avoid fiberglass poles unless car camping.

These poles are heavy and fragile although inexpensive.

Fiberglass poles are heavier than aluminum poles and are not as durable.

When temperatures fall below freezing, fiberglass poles start to crack.

Fiberglass poles are usually used to cut costs.

Fiberglass comes in varying qualities, the cheap versions tend to splinter rather easily.

Fiberglass poles also have metal sleeves at their ends, these tend to get caught in pole sleeves and make setting up the tent rather frustrating.

### **End Tips:**

To make set up easier some manufacturers have devised interesting ways to attach pole ends to the tent's corners. Here are a few of them:

**Ball tips** - one end of the pole has a sphere that you simply slide into the continuous sleeve until it rests in a pocket at the other end of the tent.

**Hollow end** - the end of the pole is hollow so that a pin at the tent's corner can be inserted. This seems easy but the pin sometimes slips out when you try to flex the pole.

**Point tips** - a pointed end tip is inserted into a grommet at the tent's corner. The pointed end always seems to slip out of the grommet by the time you are ready to insert the other end of the pole.

**Locking tips** - This works the same way as the pointed tip but without the problem of it slipping out of the grommet.

**Military Tent Poles**, Original Military Surplus Tent poles connect to create sturdy support for your tent or tarp, 15" tall each and all can be connected or used separately



***Adjustable Pole***





*3/4" Diameter Adjusts from 4' to 8'  
Friction lock secures height and tension  
Galvanized steel construction*

Use ski bags to hold your dining tarp, poles, pegs and ropes together.  
They are relatively inexpensive at the end of ski season.

## Workmanship

Although any tent may be adequate for your needs,  
you may want to consider how long you would like your tent to last.  
Good workmanship means you can have a long-lasting relationship with your tent.

A well-made tent should have lap-felled seams around the floor seam.  
Lap-felled seams (*like the seams on the sides of your Levis*) provide extra strength,  
because they are actually four layers of interlocking fabric joined by a double row of  
stitching.

On uncoated nylon tents, check for taped seams. Because nylon tends to unravel,  
taping or hiding the end of the fabric behind the seam with another piece of fabric  
will stop or stall this process.

Finally, make sure that all stress points are reinforced either with extra stitching or  
bar tacking.

Tug at the material to make sure the load is equally distributed across the  
reinforcement.

Unequal distribution can cause premature wear on your tent.

## Waterproofing

*Today's tents are mostly water resistant, although, even if the manufacturer calls it unnecessary, it's a good idea to seam-seal your tent.*

*Ideally this should be done prior to the camping trip.*

*The tents usually come with instructions, and the best course of action would be to follow the manufactures recommendation.*

*Set up your tent in a protected area, and put the fly on inside out. Run seam sealer (included with some new tents, or available at outdoor stores) along every seam on the fly and the floor. It's better to apply two thin coats than one thick coat. Allow to dry for several hours before putting the tent away.*

*Water can still invade most tents through WICKING. This is where something touching the side of the tent will, through capillary action, draw the water through the tent wall onto the item touching it. This could be a backpack, clothes, sleeping bag, or any other item capable of holding moisture.*

*This can be an especially bad surprise on the morning of a heavy dew.*

Campers agree that waterproofing is an important feature to consider.

There is nothing more miserable than sleeping in a wet tent.

The better the material, the more water-resistant, then the more likely you are to sleep dry. But there are some days that it rains so hard that no matter how good your tent, you're going to get wet (if for no other reason that you bring the rain in yourself going in and out of the tent). It may rain for days on end while you cower inside your tent waiting for the deluge to subside. During this time, your tent does not even have time to dry out, but as long as your sleeping bag is fairly dry, you can sleep warmly, if not entirely comfortably, in your damp tent.

There are occasions like these that have taught some campers to keep a spare tarp on hand. The tarp can then be erected over your tent to provide an extra roof and a little extra protection from the rain.

Just remember to give the tarp a little slant so that water doesn't pool up in the middle of it.

To keep your tent as dry as possible, it is important to seal its seams, especially those around the floor of the tent. Most leaks occur at the seams because that is where the needles that sewed the pieces together left holes.

Although parts of the tent are coated, the needle holes in the seams will allow water to enter your tent; therefore manufacturers often include an applicator bottle of

sealant designed to close these tiny holes. Buy some sealer (*available at most outdoors stores*) and follow the directions.

Then seal them again.

Spread the fly (and the tent if it is not seam-taped) out on the ground; run a thin coating of sealant along the seams. Allow the sealant to dry according to the instructions on the bottle, and then apply a second coat.

Sealing seams every season helps ensure that your tent will perform the way it's supposed to.

Depending on how much you use the tent, the sealer can last up to two years. If you use your tent a lot or have subjected it to a lot of rain or snow, seal the seams more often.

You can buy seam sealer at any outdoor store and most discount stores. It is very cheap with easy to follow directions.

Rain flies have to be seam-sealed every few seasons.

The sun too will eventually cause a tent to deteriorate.

If possible, camp in the shade to avoid harmful UV rays. You might consider simply leaving your [rain fly](#) on during the day. They are easier to replace after a few seasons of abuse than the entire tent.

Tent floors can wear out, so use a ground tarp when possible.

### Tip

When camping in the cold or snow, try to position your tent so that the early morning sun warms you and evaporates the dew or frost on your tent.

## Set-up

You will also want to consider how easily a tent can be set up and taken down - important when it comes to pitching a tent in the dark or wind or rain.

A golden rule is to

***always set your tent up in the yard before your first camping trip***

This rule serves many purposes.

- First because you want to make sure that all of the parts are enclosed in the package. Think of how awful it would be to be at your campsite and find that a [pole](#) was missing.
- Also you want to have practice at pitching the tent so that you will have an idea as to what you have to do once you are at camp.

You don't want to waste a lot of your precious camping time trying to set up a tent that you aren't familiar with.

You may also want to practice setting up in the dark!

While you have your tent set up in your yard there are a few things that I highly recommending doing.

The first is waterproofing.

Most tents are considered waterproof but it never hurts to give it an extra boost.

You also want to check the [stakes](#) for your tent.

If the tent comes with the skinny metal stakes, forget them.

Buy yourself some of the [larger plastic stakes](#).

They will make the tent much more securely attached to the ground. They are very cheap and I would recommend buying and taking extra. You will be amazed at the uses you can find for tent stakes.

Also remember to never ever ever use the loops on the tent to pull the stakes out of the ground. They are not meant for this and doing this could cause them not to hold at the most inconvenient of times - like when it is windy and rainy and you most want to be inside of the tent.

If you have a hammer with a claw that will fit to pull them out, use that.

If not, then [stake pullers](#) are relatively inexpensive and available wherever you buy the extra stakes.

There are several different methods of tent set up-clip systems, sleeve systems and grommet systems. In the clip system, the ends of the [poles](#) are held by grommets and the tent clipped to the [poles](#); in the sleeve system, the [poles](#) are pushed through sleeves in the tent and the ends are held by grommets; and the simple grommet system, in which the [poles](#), usually rigid aluminum poles, are held by grommets or loops with little or no bending of the poles. Some tents employ combinations of the two systems, the clip and sleeve combination being the most common.

## Color

While color is a matter of personal preference, there are reasons why you may choose one color over another. Bright, neon-like colors are good only in search-and-rescue situations because the blinding material will stand out against the snow or the green and brown of the woods or the sand in the desert. Since most camping involves designated sites, this situation rarely arises. It is more common among mountain climbers or others who find themselves in this situation having traveled in remote areas. For the very reason bright colors are effective in emergency situations as described above, these colors can be annoying to other campers, causing a visual disturbance in what is supposed to be a natural, outdoors experience.

The fabric color affects the quality of light inside your tent. If your tent is pale green or blue, the bright sunlight filtered through your tent will form a soft light inside. On rainy or overcast days, the light inside your tent could be slightly depressing. These colors are also a bit more inconspicuous in the backcountry. In contrast, orange and yellow fabrics are great in foul weather because they produce a brighter light inside your tent but few manufacturers use these colors anymore just because they are so bright.

As a matter of fact, there is a definite trend toward using more inconspicuous and environmentally pleasing colors such as grey, light grey, white and tan. These please the eye both inside and outside the tent. Blue and gold combinations are also used in many tents as are lodengreen or spruce, charcoal, burgundy, teal and aqua. Blue-grey and green are by far the most common tent colors.

**Consider a quality ground cloth for under your tent to protect the floor and to keep it drier and cleaner. This should be the same shape as your tent and slightly smaller.**



## The Fly

The '**fly**' or '**roof fly**' or '**rain fly**' is the separate sheet of waterproofed fabric that covers the main tent body (in most modern double-wall tent designs).

***The rain fly of your tent is undoubtedly the most integral part of your tent when the rain begins to fall.***

***It is essentially your last line of defense from the cold, wet rain.***

The fly may just cover a central part of the roof, or it may extend all the way to the ground. It may incorporate an integral vestibule or annex by the tent door(s), or even a porch-style awning on some family models.

In any case, it is likely to be somewhat heavier than the rest of the tent, as the fly

takes the most abuse over time from UV light, winds, rains, birds, trees

It's a good idea to purchase 1 or 2 extra flies when you first get the new tent  
(*or soon after*),  
for likely replacement needs down the road.  
(Very happy when a model is discontinued and parts become scarce.)

Flies need to be re-treated/sealed for waterproofness every so often, and like the rest of the tent should be stored clean and dry.

In use you won't always need it of course  
in less humid climates with little rain it is fun to go fly-less,  
for increased ventilation,  
and  
nighttime star-gazing on models with sheer ceiling material.

Most fly sheets also include extra sewn-on web loops or metal rings, for attaching [guy-out lines](#) in windy conditions:

It's a good idea to get some good weather-proof cord  
(available at most sports or hardware stores)  
and heavy-duty [stakes](#) to augment the basic tent package, and use them if there's  
any chance of strong gusts.

**There are four very important characteristics of a rain fly:  
it's length, it's tightness, the presence of reinforced guy points  
and the presence of vents.**

1. Rain flies should be full length, so they protect the inner walls from getting wet and from letting too much cold air into the tent, or even worse spindrift. But there still must be enough space between the ground and the bottom of the rain fly so that ventilation is not inhibited. As a general rule, the seam that attaches the tent floor to the tent wall should be covered by the rain fly.

2. The tightness of the rain fly is important because if it's not tight when dry, it certainly won't be tight when wet. When the fly gets wet it stretches and begins to sag. This allows water to enter into the tent when the fly fabric touches the tent fabric. To prevent this the camper must go out and tighten [guy lines](#). Some flies are equipped with compression straps and ladderlock buckles at the corners that can be tightened when the fabric begins to sag.

3. Reinforced [guy points](#) are a must if you want your tent to be standing during wind and rain. These points allow you to anchor your tent and stretch the rain fly to avoid sagging. Look for at least four [guy points](#) if you want to have a sturdy shelter.

4. Vents are an often-overlooked characteristic, but are extremely important in the battle versus condensation. Without vents, the warm, humid air that rises to the top of tent has a long way to go until it reaches the bottom of the fly to escape. Vents placed high on the rain fly allow this air to escape more rapidly and eliminate the formation of water droplets due to condensation. But please, make sure the vents are well protected from letting rain in.

They really can make the difference between a solid shelter and a large loose tumbleweed-type tent.

If in doubt, guy it out!

**Note:** We're talking tents here, not tornado shelters.

Keep track of the weather before and during your trip, use proper gear for the likely conditions, and be realistic about your overall safety needs and the ability of your equipment and fellow campers.

## Additional Tips

Once you've spent bucket loads for your tent, follow these tips to make sure it lasts long and serves you well:

### Vestibules and Other Features

Many tents come equipped with vestibules. A vestibule is essentially a tent's front porch. It is designed to protect gear from the elements and can offer a canopy under which to cook in foul weather.



**(Never cook inside a tent.)**

**WARNING:** You must remember that any open flame in a tent is dangerous. DO NOT use candles when you are sleeping. There is a chance you may not wake up.

A vestibule also gives you somewhere to put your shoes—a place that is not inside the tent, but not outside either.

### Storage

Most tents offer mesh storage pouches that are good for storing small personal items

like watches, compasses, and small flashlights.

Just don't forget to remove those things when you stuff the tent back into its sack. Many manufacturers include a small loop (*not to be confused with tent [poles](#)*) in the mid-center of the tent that you can use to suspend a flashlight.

## Netting

Even if weather isn't a problem, insects sometimes are.

Well-built tents feature finely woven insect netting in their roof panels, entrances, and end panels. Depending on the time of year and location, a tent is valuable as a shelter from the elements and an impenetrable barrier to mosquitoes and black flies.

Such netting lets you see your surroundings while holding off the invasion of biting insects. The netting does double duty in the roof panels-it not only keeps insects out, but allows moisture expelled from occupants in the tent to be released outside, keeping conditions inside comfortable and less humid than they might otherwise be.

## Washing Your Tent

**Don't wash in a washing machine  
or  
dry in a dryer**

You will want to keep any equipment you buy in tip-top shape.

This is especially true for a tent, which typically represents the biggest investment in any single piece of outdoor equipment you're likely to make.

The trouble is, a tent is your first line of defense against the elements and is always in contact with the earth when being used.

The sad fact of the matter is that the clean, unruffled beauty will eventually become soiled, whether from the ground on which it's pitched, or from any goop that falls from the trees around it.

Unfortunately you can't just send your synthetic fiber wonder to the dry cleaners or toss it into a washing machine to rid it of past brushes with the wilderness.

Rest assured, washing your tent isn't hard, it just takes a little care and some elbow grease.

If you find yourself faced with a tent that has undergone the ravages of a rainstorm that turned your particular patch of outdoor wilderness into a mucky hell, chances are your tent has taken the brunt of the misery.

In your hasty exit from your campsite, you probably stuffed your mud-smeared tent back into its stuff-sack to be dealt with later.

Later quickly becomes now on your return home, and you wonder how you're going to deal with the mess the outdoors has made of your outdoor shelter.

The first step is to dry everything out.

That means draping your tent over a clothes line in the garage, or over several chairs inside.

Allow your tent to dry thoroughly overnight.



Cleaning is best done outside by using a brush to gently wipe away dried mud from the fabric. You'll find that your tent's synthetic fabric easily repels dirt and that a good brushing is all that's really needed to get your tent looking like new again.

For heavily soiled areas, spot clean with a solution of soapy water.

Use **only the mildest** of detergent soaps.

**Never use detergent of washing machines or dryers** because they can damage the tent's protective coating and seams

Either brushing or wet-spot cleaning can also be used to clean the fly, and it may be a good time to seal the tent and fly seams.

Allow adequate drying time before stuffing your tent back into its sack.

In some cases-where your tent has come into contact with oil or pine sap-it may be difficult to clean the tent entirely.

Look at stains such as these as war wounds that tents wear as badges of honor in their on-going battle to keep their owners safe, sound, and comfortable while nature whirls around them in the night.

### **A little tip . . .**

*Avoid well-meaning advice to buy an  
"ecologically unobtrusive"  
tent.*

*Sure, browns, grays, and greens blend into the landscape,  
but they can be awfully difficult to find after a long day on  
the trail.*

*If you get lost, a red tent is much easier to spot.  
Also, dark interiors make for gloomy stormbound days;  
stick with bright, light colors.*

## One Last Note to Ponder . . .

### HOW FLAMMABLE IS YOUR TENT?

Most tents, even those that are labeled flame resistant, will burn, so keep all sources of heat or flames at a safe distance.

To prevent a serious fire or burn, follow these suggestions:

1. Read the labels before purchasing a tent. Buy only a flame resistant tent.
2. Pitch your tent at least five meters from grills and fireplaces.
3. Have an escape plan, and be prepared to cut your way out of the tent if a fire occurs.
4. Use only battery-operated lights in or near tents and campers.
5. Keep a fire extinguisher or container of water available at all times.
6. Maintain at least a one meter clear area, free of leaves, dry grass, pine needles, etc., around grills, fireplaces, and tents.
7. Thoroughly extinguish all fires, and turn off fuel lanterns and stoves before leaving the campsite or before going to bed.

See [Emergency Fire Procedures](#)

To prevent accidents in the night, use phosphorescent paint to mark the top of corner pegs of tents, guylines, etc.



[More on](#)

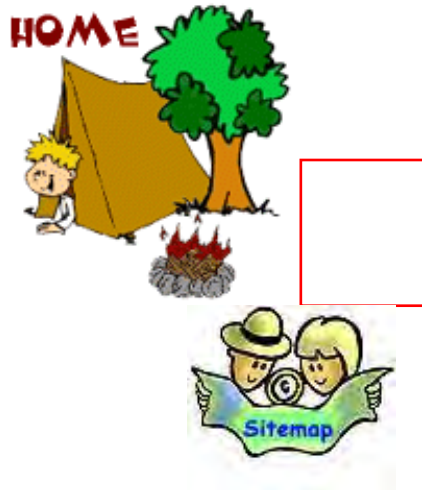
[Other](#)  
[Sleeping](#)  
[Quarters](#)



## COMPANY ADDRESSES

Do you need an address or phone number for an outdoor gear company?

[Here is a listing of a contact information for some of the major gear companies.](#)



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Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



RECYCLE-A-BIKE

BIKE SALE



## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Purchasing a Sleeping Bag

[Principles of sleeping bag design](#) [Determine the Purpose of the Sleeping Bag](#)

[Determine the Shape](#)

[Rectangular Style Sleeping Bag](#) [Mummy Style Sleeping Bag](#) [Hybrid style sleeping bag](#)

[Determine the Size](#) [Determine Temperature Rating](#) [Determine Insulation](#) [Determine the](#)

[Lining](#) [Pricing](#)

[CARE & STORAGE](#)

[Terminology for all the different types of materials used](#)

A well-chosen bag will fit the person using it, be easy to pack, store and care for, and suit the temperature it's being used for.

*Sleeping bags are pretty much unnecessary for typical family summer camping.*

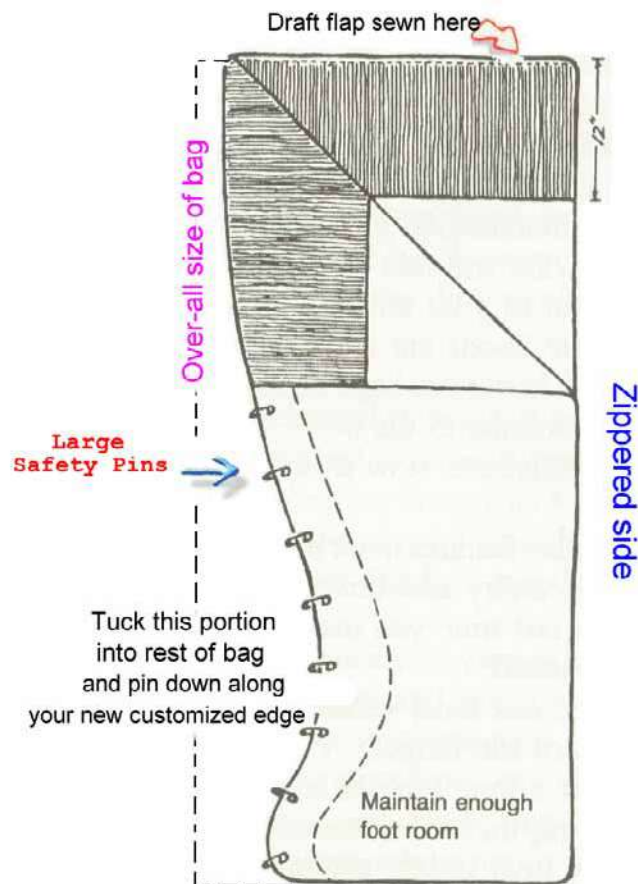
*One or two light wool or fluffy acrylic blankets, will provide plenty of warmth in temperatures to 45 degrees.*

**All you really need is a  
basic rectangle Sleeping bag**

## for cushion if anything else!

For a child, the light-weight cotton ones will be fine. They can be found in almost every department or discount store, frequently in popular cartoon character designs, for \$10 on up.

If for any reason all you have for a child is an adult [basic rectangle Sleeping bag](#), you can always custom fit it to fit your child in the diagram below . . .



### Customizing a Sleeping bag for a child

For an outdoor experience, you may want to shop carefully for one in the right size, shape, warmth, fabric, weight, and price that's perfect for your camping needs.

### 📍 Principles of sleeping bag design

1. The smaller the bag, the less area it will have to insulate.

**Translation:** *Confining mummy bags are much warmer for their*

*weight than roomy rectangular ones.*

2. Most heat loss from a sleeping bag occurs through the open head end.

It's nearly impossible to seal the open end of a rectangular style sleeping bag so that warm air won't escape.

(One solution is to install a collar - [see diagram above for details](#).) For this reason integral hoods are mandatory on sleeping bags that will be used for cold weather camping.

**Tip:** An effective makeshift collar can be made from a sweater or scarf. Drape the garment across your chest and bunch the fabric around your neck and shoulders, feathering it to the adjacent sleeping bag fabric. This will eliminate drafts and increase warmth.

3. A full length zipper which runs from foot to chin is a must. Bags with half-length zippers become impossibly hot in warm weather.

## **Bag Anatomy**

*By Nancy Prichard*

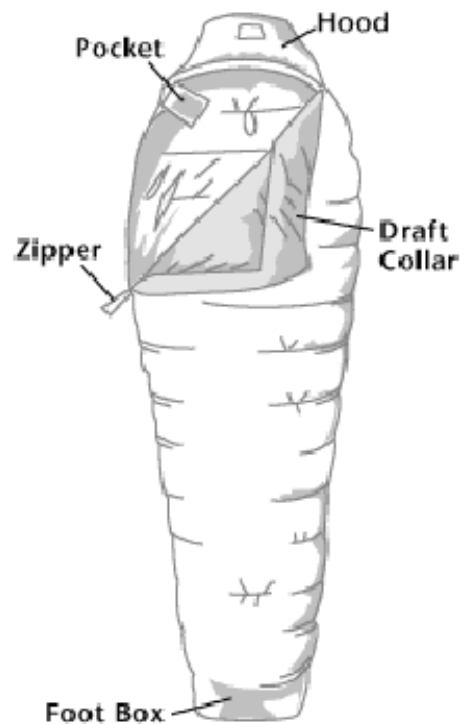
When you buy a bag, any bag, there are several features you should check. Start at the top.

**Hood.** Most bags have a hood that can be drawn tight around your head in cold weather. Up to 50 percent of your body's heat can be lost through your head, so a good hood can greatly improve the efficiency of your bag. Get in the bag and pull the drawstring. Can you still breathe with the hood in place? Can you turn, or roll, without suffocating? A hood should have slightly more fill material than the rest of the bag,

and when in place, still have room to accommodate a cap.

**Draft collar.** Scrutinize the draft collar, which is at the base of the hood. This insulated tube is designed to prevent heat loss from around your neck and shoulders. Rectangular, summer bags may not have draft collars, but they are an instrumental part of winter bags. The collar should be fluffy enough to fill the excess space between your neck and shoulders, but not so bulky you feel like you are wearing an inner tube around your neck.

**Foot box.** Since your feet take up room in the bottom of the bag, many sacks are designed with a flared, boxed, or barrel-shaped foot box to accommodate these protrusions better. In some mountaineering bags, extra room is added to the foot box to accommodate boots or water bottles.



**Zipper and stitching.** Look at the zipper and stitching. The zipper should have teeth big enough to run smoothly, without catching on fabric. Make sure the fabric has enough integrity to hold up along the sewn seams. Tug evenly at the seams to ensure that they don't separate from the fabric, and that the fabric stays in place. Stitching should be close and tight. Open the bag and look at the overall construction, features and finish of the bag to determine its quality.

**Zipping bags together.** One convenient trick is to zip two bags together to turn a single sleeper into a double. Many manufacturers use the same zippers. If bags have zippers that are similar in design, they can often be zipped together. If you are zipping two bags together, you can use bags of different warmth. In cold situations, put the thicker bag on top. Remember that mated bags provide less heat than separate bags, since there are more gaps and more movement to push out warm air. If you have a bag you might want to mate with your new purchase, bring it along to ensure compatibility.

**Zipper flap.** Most bags have an insulated tube or flap that runs parallel to the zipper in order to block heat loss. The tube should be sewn only to the lining material, since sewing through the bag creates holes that allow air leaks. Cold weather bags may have two thickly filled draft tubes. If there is a single flap or tube, it should be sewn to the top zipper so it hangs down when you sleep. Flaps or tubes that are too narrow may interfere with the zipper, so check out the action before you buy.

**Pockets.** Some bags come equipped with accessory pockets, but they can be more of a hindrance than a help. Are you a Princess and the Pea sleeper? Do you really want to roll over onto your glasses and car keys? If an accessory pocket sounds appealing, put items in it to test its position and padding.

**Warranty.** Ask about the bag's warranty. What is covered and for how long? Some companies offer a warranty on materials and workmanship for the owner's lifetime, others limit warranty to "faulty"

materials and construction. If you buy a bag, note the name and customer service number of the manufacturer. Most companies will repair damaged equipment for a nominal cost.

## **Determine the Purpose of the Sleeping Bag**

- If being used for family camping--consider comfort
- If backcountry camping--consider weight and size

## **What Type Determine the Shape**

Unless you are backpacking where weight is the overriding factor, you can choose whatever shape you like.

Sleeping bags come in either a rectangle, mummy or tapered shape, narrower at the bottom.

### **Rectangular Style Sleeping Bag**

The most common sleeping bag is the rectangular style. It is roomy and comfortable inside, and can be opened and used as a comforter on warm nights.

If you like to sleep with your legs and arms all sprawled out, then a rectangular bag may be best for you.

Many rectangular bags can be opened and zipped together to make a double size bag - great for very young kids and especially good for parents!

Generally, they are the least expensive and easiest to zip together to make a double bag for two people, but they are also the bulkiest and heaviest.

### **Rectangular type**





- Provides more space for movement
- Can be zipped together to create a double sleeping bag
  - Can be fully opened and used as an extra blanket

Because of the extra space they are not as efficient in keeping you warm.

Roll over in the middle of the night while sleeping and icy cold air can rush into the bag. Further, you can move around at night and find yourself laying on a freezing cold part of the bag that hasn't had the benefit of your body warmth to keep that area comfortable.

The casual, family or first-time camper often chooses a rectangular bag for its comfort and versatility.

**Family camper's usually camp in the summer - therefore all you really need is this basic rectangle Sleeping bag for cushion if anything else!**

Some folks who are of very large frame like the rectangular bag so they can stretch out.

Further, it is much easier to change your clothes inside a rectangular bag, where this can be a feat of acrobatics in a mummy style bag.

Also if you're on a budget, bargains can be found looking at rectangular bags.

## Mummy Style Sleeping Bag

The mummy style sleeping bag is meant to wrap tightly around the sleeper, so it will provide maximum warmth while using less material.

*Mummy bags tend to be warmer because there is less space to heat.*

If you will be camping in cold weather, like 40 degrees and below, you might want to consider the mummy.

This efficiency will also keep the bag's weight to a minimum, they take up less room in a stuff bag making this style the choice if you will be backpacking.

Not everyone likes the confines of the mummy, so you might want to try one before buying.

### Mummy type



- Weighs less
- Smaller size requires less energy to keep warm at night
  - Has a hood to pull tight around your head.

The more serious explorer, who needs protection in more extreme conditions, often prefers the efficiency and technical features of the mummy design

Mummy bags are more expensive because they're more complex to make,  
but are worth it!

Tapered bags fall between the two.

They can be zipped to others with matching zippers, take less body heat to warm them than rectangular ones, and allow some room for foot movement.

Variations on these include the "barrel" shape, which is a mummy with extra space in the middle. This is a good compromise if you want a mummy's warmth but need a little space for comfort.

*In a mummy bag the urgency of ones need to urinate is inversely proportional to the amount of clothing worn.*

*It is also inversely proportional to the temperature and the degree to which the mummy bag is completely zipped up.*



## Hybrid



Hybrid bags, also called tapers and semi-rectangular combine mummy bags with rectangular bags. Resembling a rectangular bag, they may taper down slightly as they go toward the feet and will have a rounded end. Like the mummy bag the removed space means lighter weight and less wasted area to keep warm at night. Like a rectangular bag it offers more room for a person with a larger frame. Usually weighing just a little more than a mummy bag, this style offers a good compromise between price, weight and warmth.

## Overbags & Bivy Sacks

Overbags and Bivy Sacks are used with a sleeping bag. Overbags are used when additional warmth is needed, like during extreme winter camping. Overbags can also be used in extremely warm conditions as a light sleeping bag, when even the thinnest and lightest bag will roast you alive in hot humid conditions.

Overbags may also be used to supplement the waterproof abilities of a sleeping bag. Bivy sacks are different. Typically waterproof and made of a breathable material, a bivy sack is used when sleeping under the stars, in extreme wet conditions, or winter camping. Both overbags and bivy sacks (*you may hear these terms interchanged*) increase the range of use of your bag, but cut down on how well the materials breathe.

#### Determine the Size

- Sizes vary
- ### **Basic Sizes**

**Junior size bags** are built for people up to 4' 11" (59") tall

*The juniors are for small children. If weight is not important, I suggest you get a standard length for your child. The bag will last many years, and a junior size bag will soon be outgrown.*

**Full size bags (Standard)** are most common and at a length of 6' 3" (75") fit most average-sized adults;

**Tall size bags** are the same width as a full but are longer 6' 5" (77") to accommodate taller individuals;

and

**King size bags** are a little wider than the full bags and a little longer than tall bags, fitting most adults up to 6' 2" (74") tall.

Who will be using it?

An average sized person can fit comfortably inside most sleeping bags, but a small or a very large person needs to actually crawl

inside one to be sure that it's long enough and wide enough for comfort and small enough to retain warmth.

A well-fitting bag will allow room to turn over and move around a little bit, but will not have so much air space that body heat won't warm it sufficiently.

A short person or a child might be able to get by with a normal sized sleeping bag by tying off the lower portion with twine or camping straps.

### **Another dimension to consider is the girth.**

Girth is the inside space, as measured around the sleeper's waist area.

Mummy bags have the smallest girth, and rectangular the largest.



### **Determine Temperature Rating**

- Depends on the conditions you plan to camp in
- A bag temperature rating indicates the lowest temperature in which a person would be comfortable.

**"Comfortable" is a very subjective term**  
*everyone is different*

Use of a [ground pad](#) is assumed, necessary and very important -  
this provides extra insulation and comfort.  
A foam and air core pad is the best.

Other factors should be considered-  
-quality of ground pad and tent, personal level of energy etc.

Most bags are rated according to the lowest temperatures in which they provide comfort, but there is no set standard in the industry. The rating is determined by the manufacturer. A bag rated as "three season" means that it will be comfortable for sleeping for an average person in temperatures ranging from about 15° through the summer.

When selecting a temperature rating for a sleeping bag, be sure to consider the following:

- The lower the rating, the warmer the bag
- If you plan to camp in warm conditions and also want your bag to be comfortable on cool spring and fall nights, look for a three-season bag rated to 20 degrees
  - Traditional camp bags are comfortable to about 40 degrees
- In general, consider the coldest night you will likely experience, and then drop down 10 or 20 degrees
- Keep in mind that temperature ratings always assume that the bag will be used with a ground pad
  - The loft of a sleeping bag refers to how much the insulation "fluffs up"
    - More loft means more warmth
- For maximum loft, look for a bag with a differential cut, one in which the inner lining is smaller than the outer shell. This allows the insulation to loft up to its maximum.



#### **Basic ratings:**

- Traditional sleeping bags are rated at 40 degrees F
  - Three season bags are rated at 20 degrees F
  - Cold weather bags are rated at 0 degrees F
- Winter camping bags are rated from -15 degrees F to -30 degrees F

Consider these as guidelines only. You may sleep warmer or cooler than someone else. These guidelines seem to assume that you will be wearing warm clothing too.

You can probably use any bag rated for summer temperatures as you start out, since you will most likely be camping during the warmer months.

There are several ways to make a bag warmer, other than wearing warmer pajamas. One common way is to use a "liner" bag.

These bags are placed inside your regular sleeping bag, like adding an extra blanket to your bed. You can buy these bags ready made, or make one by attaching a blanket to the sleeping bag with safety pins. You can also just throw a blanket over the top of your bag, rather than put it inside. When it is really cold,

two summer bags can be used, one inside the other. You may also consider bringing the girth in by using the method [described in the diagram above . . .](#)

### **My suggestion**

It's easy to make a sleeping bag warmer, so start with a warm weather bag like a 40 degree rating or warmer depending on your location.

Most people select three-season models thinking they represent the greatest value for the money.

### **Wrong!**

The typical three season sleeping bag becomes too warm when temperatures rise above 50 degrees Fahrenheit, which means they are next to worthless for average summer use.

Only if you do considerable primitive camping in the spring and fall, should you buy a three-season bag. Otherwise, a lighter, less costly summer bag will be a better buy. Tent temperatures commonly run about 10 degrees warmer than the outside environment, so a good summer bag will keep you toasty well below freezing. In really cold weather, you can mate your summer bag with an outer or inner liner, or a blanket.

## **SHELL**

### **Nylon, Polyester, Taffeta:**

This is the most basic of materials and is used from bargain basement bags to custom made sacks. The least durable of synthetic materials used on sleeping bags, these are best used for car camping or general walk-in camping. Long journeys into the backcountry can test the limits of these materials. Low cost and very breathable, nylon, polyester and taffeta are best used for late-spring, summer and early fall camping when conditions will be tepid to dry. Although they breathe very well, without waterproof treating offer very little protection in damp conditions.

### **Ripstop:**

Ripstop is nylon or polyester that has had heavier threads woven into the material.

These heavier threads reinforce the shell making it stronger and a hair more moisture resistant than nylon while still being very breathable. Ripstop is an excellent choice for three season camping when things won't be too damp.

### **Microfiber, Gossamer Micro, DryClime:**

Also made of nylon or polyester, microfiber and its cousin's gossamer micro and DryClime are very tightly woven fibers that are very strong and moisture resistant. Because they do not have the heavier threads of ripstop, microfiber is softer than it's other counter parts. Microfiber is an excellent choice for three season camping, or even four season camping if your winter camping is in ideal conditions and doesn't involve crawling into a snow cave for the night.

### **DryLoft:**

DryLoft is a close relative to Gore-Tex, but it is Gore-Tex with an attitude. Sharing all of the water resistant abilities of Gore-Tex, DryLoft is very breathable, which means a more comfortable stay in your bag. Just like your tent should allow moisture to get out, your sleeping bag should allow the natural perspiration breathe through the bag, and not get trapped inside, making for damp conditions by morning. What that means is warm and dry on the inside, and damp and wet stays on the outside. DryLoft is the premium choice for four season camping, canoe camping, or extended stays in the backcountry.

### **Gore- Tex:**

Sleeping bags with a Gore-Tex shell should be avoided. Although Gore-Tex is durable and water resistant, it doesn't breathe well which can make for damp conditions inside a bag. Gore-Tex is an excellent choice when looking at an overbag or bivy sack to supplement your sleeping bag for winter camping or camping in extreme conditions. Most manufacturers have stopped making sleeping bags with Gore-Tex shells.

### **Canvas:**

If you go down to your Army Navy store you may find sleeping bags with canvas shells. Canvas is very durable and breathable. Canvas is made of cotton, and when it gets wet, it stays wet. Also wet canvas is extremely heavy. Canvas is also very heavy. If you get a bag with a canvas shell, you probably will be using it for car camping.

### **Cotton:**

Extremely breathable, lightweight, and easy to clean, cotton is a low cost material used in bargain bags. Like canvas cotton does not take well to moisture, and due to it's ability to breathe and wick, should only be used in the warmest of conditions.

## **LINING**

### **Nylon, Polyester, Taffeta:**

This is the staple lining of sleeping bags. Soft and supple, if you are using cotton



blend sheets on your bed, you are already sleeping on the stuff. Breathable and comfortable, these materials don't tend to heat up as much as others that can make lying in the same spot uncomfortably warm. Lower cost bags may use nylon or polyester to making lining materials that feel like heavy sheets or a comforter.

### **Brushed or Fleece:**

Some sleeping bags may have a brushed lining or a fleece lining. These bags help keep you feel warmer when the temperature slides down and it may feel better on your skin. Fleece linings can trap heat, and if you tend to wake up when your pillow gets to warm these linings may have the same effect on you.

### **Silk:**

When I became a winter survival school instructor I was issued a down mummy bag with a silk lining. There is nothing like sleeping in a silk lined bag. Soft, supple, breathable, and it doesn't overheat as you lay in the same spot. Silk is very expensive and can tear more easily than other materials. A tear in a silk bag is also very difficult to repair, and can be disastrous with a down filled bag.

### **Flannel or Cotton:**

These natural materials are breathable, durable and lightweight. They are also very easy to clean and repair. Typically found in bargain bags, cotton and flannel both trap moisture, and should only be used in tepid conditions.

## **Determine Insulation**

Once upon a time the good bags used prime goose down for insulation. This is still used, mainly in the highly specialized mountaineering bags where extreme dry cold, and light weight are the primary considerations. Down's cost and difficulty in washing make it impractical for most camping.

Actually, modern synthetics have been developed which have all but replaced down. Synthetics cost less, are washable, and can be nearly as warm as down, especially when it is damp outside. For most family camping situations, most any of the synthetics will be sufficient.

### **Down**



- Best natural insulator
- Light and compressible
- **Must be kept dry**  
or it loses its insulating abilities
- The best natural insulator, with a higher weight-to-warmth ratio than any synthetic on the market
  - The preferred choice for those who want to travel light in dry conditions
- This insulation is more expensive than synthetic fills, and loses most of its insulating capacity when wet, plus it takes a long time to dry
- Note that each down bag has a fill power number that indicates how much space an ounce of down will fill. The higher the power, the loftier and warmer the bag.

The type of fill (insulation) determines the amount of warmth that stays inside the bag; the warmth itself comes from the body heat of the person sleeping in it.

**Goose down** is a natural fiber that has long been held as the standard as lightweight, comfortable, and warm. They compact easily into small stuff bags, mold easily around a camper's body to retain heat, and are extremely durable. The down side is that they can be miserably uncomfortable if they get wet, take longer to dry, are more expensive than most synthetics, and are most safely cleaned professionally.

- **Synthetic Fill**



- Cost less than down bags
  - Insulates even when wet
    - Dries quickly
- ideal for boating trips and for camping in wet conditions*
- Higher end synthetic fills come close to down's efficiency
  - They also weigh more than down and take up more space when packed
  - Among the most frequently used synthetic fills are Duofill and Hollofil

Synthetic fills provide enough warmth for most casual campers. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for temperature rating, but adjust it according to your personal sleeping habits.

If you know you are a cold sleeper, get one rated at a lower degree than you will be camping in.

*Any sleeping bag can be made warmer by using a purchased or home-sewn flannel liner,*

*and some bags come with their own*

### **Determine the Lining**

- **Nylon Taffeta**

*Used to line parts of the garment that are exposed to more abrasion than mesh can handle, or in areas where hydrophilic mesh would attract moisture from the outside such as the hem or cuff areas. This smooth, durable taffeta slips easily over mid-layers.*

- **Polyester Cotton**
- **Fleece**

Some outer shells are moisture resistant; this is terrific at keeping out dampness, but they also can keep moisture in, resulting in a cold and clammy sleeping experience. If you perspire heavily, you may prefer a cotton exterior, or at least an absorbent interior fabric.

Some of the new materials will wick moisture to the outside without allowing it to penetrate in; they can add \$100 to the price of a sleeping bag, but if you frequently camp in wet weather, it might be worth it.

Dark colors, both inside and outside, draw more heat from the sun. This is good on two counts: they dry out more quickly, and they stay warmer on cold, bright days.

### **PRICE**

A good sleeping bag, intended for regular use during two or three seasons over a period of five or six years, will probably cost at least \$80.

If you plan to camp for an entire summer, want your bag to last a lifetime, have allergies to some of the components, or need a very lightweight, very warm, water-wicking fabric, you can spend many hundreds of dollars.

Large, heavy, flannel-lined and canvas covered ones can be found for less than \$50. These are fine for car camping during temperate seasons.

### **Consider Quality of Other Features**

- **Seams and stitching**
- **Zippers**

Zippers should be of good quality, and should not pinch or catch on the fabric when zipping up. You should be able to zip it up from the outside or inside. If you plan to connect two bags together to make a double sleeping bag, make sure the zippers are compatible.

Some bags have a collar at the top that helps keep the opening closed around your neck to retain heat. This is useful in cold weather, but is unnecessary and perhaps annoying, in warm weather.

#### • Hood

Rule number one in staying warm, 50% of your body's heat loss is through your head. Unless you plan to only do summer camping, a sleeping bag with a hood is a must have option. Hoods come in a variety of styles. Some hoods are simply made of the shell material and stretch around your head. Others may have drawstrings so you can cuddle up until just your face is coming through. Others may be insulated and offer other features to help keep the rest of you warm.

#### • Pocket

Some sleeping bags have zippered pockets or flaps on the outside of them. These are handy for keeping things that are important close to you like eyeglasses, a small flashlight, or your watch (if you don't sleep with it on).

#### • Compression Sack or Storage Bag

A storage bag helps protect your sleeping bag when it is not being used. Usually made of a breathable material these bags allow you to pack your bag so that it is loose and this helps your loft maintain it's fill. A compression sack is usually made of a more durable, moisture resistant material. This is a special bag that allows you to squeeze down your bag, taking up less room in your pack. Compression sacks are very important when hiking out in the backcountry but are not the best way to store your bag. Long-term storage of a sleeping bag in a compression sack can make it loose its loft.

#### • Draft Collar

A draft collar is usually found on mummy bags with hoods. This insulated collar fits around your neck as you sleep. Warm air stays in the bag, and cold air as you move around during the night stays out.

#### • Zipper Draft Tube or Insulated Zipper

Usually hanging down over the zipper (which helps it stay in place) this baggy area over the zipper helps keep your body warmth in while keeping drafts through the zipper out.

### CARE & STORAGE

Always open the bag after a night of sleeping in it to air it out. If it's not raining or damp out, spread it across the top of your tent or car for freshening.

Don't toss the manufacturer's care instructions.

Always read and follow them. Since fabrics and insulation differ, they might require

different care. Most bags can be washed with a mild detergent (*you can buy down-specific cleaning agents*) in your bathtub or an industrial washing machine.

***Don't get your bag dry-cleaned.***

Most sleeping bags are too large for most home washers. Take them to a Laundromat with jumbo sized equipment for laundering, or to a professional cleaning service. Goose down bags must be dry cleaned, then aired thoroughly before using again.

Synthetic fill usually air dries quickly on a clothesline or spread out on a flat surface. If it's safe for machine drying (*check the tags!*) toss a tennis shoe in with it to fluff it up.

Your sleeping bag will last longer if it's hung up, secured by clamps at the bottom end, when it's not in use. If you don't have adequate hanging space, leave it folded loosely, perhaps under a bed or on a shelf, between camping trips.

#### • Consider a storage bag

Choosing a sleeping bag is really easy.

In fact, you might not need a sleeping bag at all!

Plenty of campers started and continue with a bedroll. You can make your own bedroll by taking sheets and blankets and making up a bed just like home. Add more blankets or a comforter for cooler weather.

It will be best if you have some sort of mattress to make your bedroll on, like a futon or air mattress.

#### Do's and don'ts for sleeping bags

**Don't** roll sleeping bags; stuff them!

**Don't** yank sleeping bags out of stuff sacks; pull gently.

**Don't leave** sleeping bags stuffed for long periods of time.

**Don't** machine wash down sleeping bags.

**Don't** dryclean polyester filled sleeping bags.

**Don't** wash down bags with harsh detergents.

**Don't** pick up a wet down product without adequately supporting it.

**Do** air and fluff sleeping bags after each use.

**Do** store sleeping bags flat, on hangers, or in large porous sacks.

**Do** sponge clean the shell of your sleeping bag occasionally.

**Do** wash your sleeping bag when it gets dirty.

## **KEEPING COMFORTABLE**

Use a sleeping pad.

Lying on the cold ground isn't going to help you stay warm in the middle of the night and it won't be comfortable either.

Go to the bathroom before getting into the sack.

Anything sitting in your bladder will have to be kept at warm by your body as you sleep.

Use your hood on your sleeping bag.

If your sleeping bag doesn't have a hood consider wearing a hat while sleeping. Remember, 50% of your heat loss is through your head.

Wear clothes to bed.

If you are accustomed to sleeping in your underwear (or less) at night try sleeping in clothes. You don't have to sleep in the pants and flannel shirt you wore during the day. Long underwear or a pair of sweats can help keep you warm while taking up a relatively small amount of space and adding only a few ounces of weight to your pack.

Keep your bag dry.

Do everything possible. Don't climb into your bag wet, especially if you are in an emergency situation and you think you are getting hypothermic. A wet sleeping bag cannot keep you warm. Also make sure that your tent is well ventilated so moisture does not build up as you sleep. During the night you can expel over a cup of fluid.

Make sure your bag fits you.

If a bag is too small or too large it will create problems in staying warm. A sleeping bag should fit you so that the insulation isn't squished up, but shouldn't have a lot of extra room. A bag that is too large means you have wasted space to keep warm. A bag that is too small simply cannot do its job of keeping you warm.

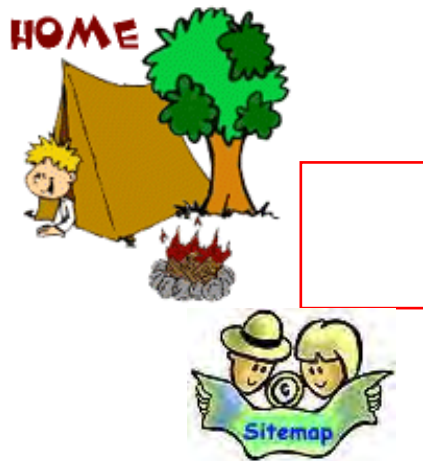
If you wake up and find yourself cold try adding more clothes. Eating some high calorie carbohydrates can throw some fuel on the internal fires. If all else fails do some exercise to get circulation increased. If you start shivering watch out for hypothermia and take increased steps to get warm including building a fire, drinking warm fluids and exercise.

**"To keep warmer -  
wear a hat to sleep in -  
80% of heat loss occurs through your head."**

## COMPANY ADDRESSES

Do you need an address or phone number for an outdoor gear company?

[Here is a listing of a contact information for some of the major gear companies.](#)



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Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Making Your Bed



Whether you are tent camping or sleeping out under the stars, using a sleeping bag or some other form of bedding, you need to put something between your torso and the cold hard ground.

[Sleeping Pads](#) [Air Mattresses](#) [Cots](#) [Pick Up Trucks](#)  
[Adding the finishing touches to your campground bed](#)

### Alternatives to sleeping on the hard ground

Sleeping on the hard ground is not conducive to a good night's rest. To address this concern there are sleeping pads.



Made primarily for backpackers, they are compact, lightweight, and durable.

### Sleeping Pads

Sleeping pads are basically just flexible sheets of foam. They are lighter (*some weigh less than a pound*), more compact and easier to carry than either air mattresses or cots, making them a good choice for backcountry use.

If purchasing a pad, campers should remember that pads are available in different degrees of thickness. Some offer little cushioning, but others have ridged or egg-carton patterns that are more comfortable. Some of the better pads even have egg-carton foam on top and insulating foam on the bottom, making them both comfortable and warm.

One drawback of pads, however, is that you tend to slide off if you are on a slight incline or if you are prone to toss and turn during sleep.

Pads should last the camper a long time. They are more durable than air mattresses, which puncture easily. In general, pads are the cheapest of the sleeping accessories, but there is a wide range of prices for all three types. If campers want to spend as little money as possible, they can just use a sheet of egg carton-shaped open-cell foam. However, campers should be aware that open-cell foam soaks up water like a sponge.

Sleeping pads are just one solution to providing some layer of comfort between you and the hard ground, but there are other alternatives. Remember those exercise pads used in the gym in high-school phys-ed class?

### Air Mattresses

Air mattresses inflate manually or with a pump, and are often flopped on the top surface. Some find them more comfortable than pads because they provide more cushion between the camper and the ground. However, they provide little protection from the cold, so are best used for car camping in warm weather.

A regular air mattress (NOT a sleeping pad) is cold because you are sleeping on air. Your body heat will warm the surface of a regular mattress, but you can never produce enough heat to warm the air in an air mattress. You will need something THICK between you and an air mattress - a sleeping bag is perfect, but you might get by with a quilt or thick mattress pad. The point is, you will need something to sleep ON as well as something to sleep UNDER.

Some like to use a pad and air mattress together.

Air mattresses, especially the large, two-person kind, are heavier and bulkier than sleeping pads. This is especially true if the mattress has to be inflated with a compressor powered by a vehicles lighter, which makes the mattress hard to transport if the vehicle is far from the campsite. Compressors can also disturb other campers, though this can be minimized if the mattress is inflated before sunset. Air mattresses can be inflated with just lung power, but this can be a very tiring chore, especially for larger mattresses.

Another item bought by my wife and I at Wal-Mart is a battery operated compressor. Works faster than the compressor powered by a vehicles lighter and very minimum noise!

About 4X4 inches in diameter.

[Click here for enlarged photo](#)



The main disadvantage of air mattresses is that they are vulnerable to punctures. This is especially true if the mattress is placed directly on the ground. Even a small, undetectable hole or tear in an air mattress can make it deflate during the night, leaving the camper on the hard ground by morning.

In general, air mattresses are more expensive than pads but less expensive than cots.

My wife and I purchased from Wal Mart a Queen-Size Air Mattress With Frame.

A bed frame that folds together along with an inflatable air mattress.

[Click Here for Enlarged photo](#)



We have a large Family size Canvas tent to accommodate this queen-size bed which is more comfortable than our bed at home.

### **Self-inflating Mattresses**

Self-inflating mattresses are hybrids of pads and air mattresses, and are the most popular sleeping accessory among backcountry campers because of their excellent portability, cushioning and warmth.

When the valve is opened, the internal foam structure causes the mattress to self-inflate. An airtight shell keeps the air in. When its time to pack up, the valve is opened again and the mattress is rolled up, forcing the air out.

The price of self-inflating mattresses varies widely. They range from about the price of a pad to twice the price of a cot. The more expensive models offer the most cushioning and insulation, while using the lightest materials possible. Conversion kits allow some self-inflating mattresses to be set up as chairs during the day.

### **Cots**

Cots are less portable than either pads or air mattresses, being both heavier and bulkier. For this reason, cots are more often used when sleeping in a vehicle or when the same site will be used for an extended time. This should not be misconstrued to mean that cots have no portability, as most can be folded up and conveniently carried for short distances.

Cots have the advantage of elevating campers well above the ground, which produces extra storage space in a tent. This quality also protects campers from hard protrusions and provides protection from animals such as snakes and scorpions that might climb on campers during the night. However, cots

offer little insulation from the cold air below, so a pad can be used simultaneously to remedy this drawback. Another advantage of a cot is that sleepers don't slide off, like they can with pads and air mattresses.

Cots are very durable, but if you are a large individual, make sure the cot you buy can support your weight. Different cots have different weight limits, though most are adequate for most people.

### Pick Up Trucks

If you happen to take your truck camping, there are different choices available.

Got a Pick Up with a cap on it?

Check out a Camper Top Tent from Campmor® that attaches to the cap door while open gives you a truck/tent effect.



*A great way to convert your vehicle into a complete camping unit. Easy setup! Just raise the rear window, lower tailgate and place tent over the opening.*

For a sleeping pad, you can use an old futon mattress that fits just right in the truck bed and is very comfortable to sleep on.

Another solution for those weekend getaways in the truck is to get one of those pick-up bed tents like the Sportz Truck tent from Napier® which even comes with a floor.



Today there are as many varied ways of camping as there are campers.

Camping becomes a personal thing.

Even though you may be away from the warm confines of your cozy bedroom at home, you still want to get just as good a night's sleep.

### Adding the finishing touches to your campground bed

Having chosen a method of ground protection for under your bed, whether it be a sleeping pad, foam pad, air mattress, futon, cot, travel trailer, or a home-made device,

it's time to add the finishing touches that will determine your bed's degree of cozy.

Backpackers have only one viable solution: sleeping bags.

The adventurous souls who love to wander in the backcountry are forever concerned about the weight and compactness of items when it comes to selecting gear.

Backpackers typically select a light-weight mummy style sleeping bag with down or synthetic insulation, filled to differing degrees of loft depending upon the seasonal extremes.

Pillows can be made from rolled up clothing, a small inflatable air pillow, or your pack. And, if it happens to get too warm during the night, simply zip down the bag a little.

Tent campers, on the other hand, need not be as concerned as backpackers about weight and size of gear.

You are limited only by the amount of storage space that is in the vehicle taking you to the campsite.

Canoeing to a campsite will not offer as much space as driving there in a car, and driving there in a car, in turn, will not have as much space as a van or truck.

However you get to the campground, take advantage of space and pack whatever gear you can that will add comfort and enjoyment to your trip.

With enough space, take regular bed items to the campground:

sheets, blankets, pillows, comforters, and quilts.

If you happen to be camping at the beach where sand eventually finds its way into everything, consider using flannel sheets rather than cotton. Flannel sheets are more comfortable because they have a loose weave that allows sand to pass through.

For many campers, standard fare will be a rectangular sleeping bag.

For camping couples, there are models available that you can zip together to accommodate the both of you.

Otherwise, open one sleeping bag, lay it flat, put a sheet over it, and then use the second bag for a blanket.

If you're an RV camper, then you have the convenience of a real bed, so take advantage of that fact and bring along bedding to make it cozy just like your bed at home.

Now that you've decided what items you need to construct a comfortable sleeping place at the campground, it's time to add a roof over your bed and consider a shelter for protection from the elements of wind, rain, snow, heat, bugs and critters.



Putting a roof over your campground bed


**COMPANY ADDRESSES**  
Do you need an address or phone number for an outdoor gear company?  
[Here is a listing of a contact information for some of the major gear companies.](#)



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## Camping Stoves



### CHOOSING A CAMP STOVE

Types of Fuel

#### Canister (compressed) Fuel

- Propane
- Isobutane
- Butane

#### Liquid-Fuel

- White Gas ("Coleman") Fuel
- Unleaded Gas
- Kerosene
- Alcohol
- wood or fuel tablets

- Different Stoves for Different Kinds of Camping
  - Stoves for Backpacking
  - Stoves for Car Camping / Family Camping
- Operation and Use of Stoves
  - Safety with Gas

### CAMPING OVENS

- The Dutch Oven / Cast Iron Pot
  - Cooking On A Dutch Oven
  - Purchasing A Dutch Oven
  - Seasoning a Camp Oven
    - Care of your oven
    - Stove Extras
- POTS AND PANS

## How To Select A Stove

*Unless you are planning to eat cereal, sandwiches, and food straight from the can you're going to need some way of cooking your meals, but which stove should you use? This depends on what kind of camping as well as what you want to cook.*

*As with other camping gear, selecting a stove and cookware can be confusing. The wide variety of stoves and fuels can*

[Camping Terminology](#)[Terms](#)[Contact Us](#)

*leave the prospective camper wondering: What's the difference? Is one better than the other? The answer is that each type of stove and fuel has advantages and disadvantages, making it great for certain types of trips but not so great for others.*

There are many different types and sizes for you to choose from.

Selecting a camping stove is easy once you know the choices and have decided what type of camping trips your family will be taking.

### **What will you be using it for?**

Backpacking?  
Travel?  
Ice fishing?  
Vacation cabin?  
Family outings?

### **Where will you be using it?**

United States?  
Europe?  
Africa?  
Asia?

### **How many people will it be used for?**

### **What kind of weather/temperatures will you be using it in?**

You can narrow your choices by determining which general type of camping you will be doing;

backpacking or family/group camping.

#### **BACKPACKING**

requires appliances that are quick to set up, easy to light, stable, fuel efficient, dependable, durable, compact and lightweight. The availability of fuel in other countries, and its performance at various altitudes and temperatures, can be a deciding factor, if using the stove for trekking or touring.

#### **FAMILY OR GROUP CAMPING**

allows more leeway in the weight and size of stoves, since they don't need to be carried in a pack. Comfort and

convenience, while cooking for a larger group, is usually the most important. Fuel efficient, dependable, durable, stable, easy to light, and quick to set up stoves are still desirable.

## WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU?

As you can see, size and weight are the two biggest factors in choosing a stove. Many manufacturers provide ratings to assist in your selection, such as the BTU output, burn time, and fuel capacity of the stove. Other requirements, such as ease of use and packing, can only be judged from actual use and recommendations.

### WEIGHT

is particularly important when *backpacking*.

As a rule, the smallest stoves range from 15 ounces to 36 ounces (with fuel)

and the *family camping* stoves rarely list weights but start at around 8 pounds (without fuel) for the lightest.

The type of fuel and size of the container also impact the overall weight of the system, as their weight will vary.

### SIZE

Both in use and packed away, is almost as important as the weight of the unit.

A well designed single or double burner stove will be easy to set up and will fold down into a compact shape that also protects the components.

- **Single burner** stoves are generally the most portable, although some are considered too heavy for backpacking. The most common fuels are white gas, butane, and unleaded gasoline.
- **Double and triple burner** stoves are good for family camping or trips that provide baggage transportation. The most common fuels are propane, white gas or unleaded gasoline.
- **Pocket stoves**, for emergency situations, consist of a small tray to hold your pot or cup, and burn a small, compressed cube of fuel.

A few stoves use "canned heat" such as Sterno, but this type of fuel burns very cool and takes a long time to cook food or boil water.

It is best reserved for an emergency survival kit.

### **EASE OF USE AND PACKABILITY**

is important to both user groups.

Who wants to spend their trip trying to outwit a stove?

They should be simple, with few parts  
(*fewer to lose and easier to maintain*),

and store compactly.

Electronic ignitions eliminate the need for matches (*dry or otherwise*) and make lighting a snap.

### **Stability,**

of both the stove and your pot on top of it, is more difficult to achieve on lighter weight stoves. Adjustable legs can help compensate for uneven terrain and surfaces.

### **BOILING TIME**

is a rating that indicates how long it takes the stove to boil water. The results are not concrete, since manufacturers don't all start their tests with the same amount of water at the same temperature.

### **BURNING TIME**

is the length of time that a stove will burn on a full "tank" or cylinder. This rating is subject to altitude, pressure and temperature changes among others.

### **CAPACITY**

is the amount of fuel that a stove with a fixed container will hold.

### **BTU**

is the maximum heat output. The higher the number, the hotter, more efficiently the stove cooks. Flame adjusters regulate the speed that fuel is released in order to control the size of the flame, and thus the temperature that you are cooking with. Though most 2 and 3 burner stoves can be adjusted, like your kitchen stove, some single burner stoves are either on or off.

### **TYPES OF FUEL**

The next question you must answer is "what type of fuel will you be using?" and this will be dependant on the type of camping you will be doing. Fuels vary in how hot they burn, how well they work in the cold, how easy they are to light, how



safe they are to use and how much they cost. Availability varies too so the places you plan to visit may determine the fuel you wish to use.

Weight, availability, price and temperature responsiveness should all be looked at in relation to your intended use. Dual Fuel or Multi fuel stoves (developed to run on 2 or more different fuels) are helpful if you are traveling to other countries, or are using the stove in a variety of climates.

There are two basic types of fuel  
**Gas or Propane?**

Both fuels make good stoves.

The best one for you depends on your preference and the type of camping you plan to do.

*No matter what fuel you choose, it's a plus if your stove takes the same fuel as your lantern(s) and space heater.*

The two main types of stove are canister and liquid gas, though some stoves aren't of either type. Canister (or cartridge) stoves use non-refillable canisters, whereas liquid gas stoves use refillable tanks.

A few other stoves use wood or fuel pellets.

### **Canister Fuel**

Canister stoves are further broken down into two main types: those that use propane, and those that use butane, isobutane, or a blend of butane and propane (and sometimes also isobutane).

Propane burns cleanly and efficiently, and produces a hot, steady flame. Also, it works well at high altitude and temperatures well below freezing. However, most propane stoves are too heavy for backpacking, since regulations require propane canisters to be thick, heavy steel.

Butane/isobutane/blend stoves produce a steady flame and work well at high altitudes. They are good for camping trips short enough that you won't have to pack multiple canisters.

However, straight butane or isobutane has drawbacks: it doesn't produce a very hot flame, and it works poorly at temperatures below 40 F because the fuel doesn't vaporize well. For colder temperatures, canisters containing a blend of butane and propane are necessary. These canisters work at

below-freezing temperatures, and have the benefit of being lighter than propane canisters. The higher the percentage of propane (blends range from 20% to 40% propane), the better it will work in the cold.

- **PROPANE** (pressurized) is sold in disposable cylinders or bulk supplies. The cylinders are heavy, making propane more suitable for family camping. It is not greatly affected by cold weather and burns very clean so stove maintenance is rarely necessary. Propane stoves operate on a high or low pressure system, and each have different parts and fittings. High pressure propane stoves are set up to run on disposable tanks and use no regulator. They can usually be converted to use a refillable tank. Low pressure propane stoves use a regulator for pressure, and deliver a more constant flame. Some can be converted to natural gas, and often serve as an inexpensive stove in vacation cabins.

Propane does not give out as much heat as the white gas stoves,  
but it has some very significant advantages for family camping.

This type of stove is very easy to use.  
Nothing to fill and no pumping needed.  
Just attach the cylinder, turn on the fuel and light with a safety match.  
Viola,  
your stove is ready for cooking.

There are even propane stoves with built in electronic starters. This feature makes the transition from cooking at home to cooking at camp easier for most people.

These stoves are great for campers and families who only go out a few times a year.  
Propane stoves are available for use with small fuel bottles, or even large RV type bottles. If you start camping a lot, you will find that the small bottles may be very, very, convenient, but very, very expensive.

The propane tanks come in



16.4 oz. disposable bottles  
and

5, 10 and 20 pound sizes.

A typical patio gas barbecue grill has a 20 pound tank.



The BBQ tank could be hooked up to a stove for the camping trip.

However, if you buy a stove that has a hose to screw into a larger fuel tank, you can get a better price at the RV refill center. You will also save a lot of bottle changes that can happen right in the middle of cooking your meals.

### [Consider a Distribution Tree](#)

#### **Advantages of Propane vs. Gasoline**

1. No pumping necessary. Saves time and effort, and in general makes the cooking go more smoothly.
2. A constant heat source. Because the pressure is not user-regulated (yes, the flame is) propane stoves provide a much more constant heat level. Make sure the propane stove you buy is "regulated," in that it provides constant pressure.
3. Cleaner and easier to refuel. Instead of adding a liquid gasoline which could overflow onto your hands or something else, with a propane stove you merely change a coupling.
4. Can be hooked up to a bulk system. There is no convenient way to do this with a gasoline-fueled stove.
5. No changing generators. With a propane stove, there is never any generator to change; if the generator goes on your gasoline stove you better have a spare, and the tools to change it. (However, generators last a long time.)

#### **Safety and Tips for Using Propane**

1. Read and follow instructions that come with stove and propane cylinder.
2. All stoves consume oxygen. Do not use in unventilated areas.
3. Use a stove as a cooking appliance only. Never alter a stove in any way. Never use stove as a space heater. Never leave stove unattended while it is burning.
4. Never allow tents, sleeping bags, clothing, or any flammable material to come close to a stove

that is operating.

5. Never install or remove propane cylinder while stove is lit, near flame, pilot lights, other ignition source or while stove is hot to touch.
6. Never store propane near flame, other ignition sources, or where temperatures exceed 1200F.
7. Keep all connections and fittings clean.
8. Propane is heavier than air and will accumulate in low places.

### Disadvantages of Propane vs. Gasoline

1. Greater fuel bulk. Propane is typically sold in disposable canisters, and these canisters -- regardless of their size -- take up more room per hour of cooking time yielded than does liquid gasoline fuel. This should only be a problem in wilderness or backpacking situations where most professional outdoor people do use the gasoline models.
2. Higher cost per hour. Propane is more expensive to run per hour. However, if you camp only a few times a year, the overall convenience should overshadow the small extra cost. Then, too, if you hook up a bulk propane system, the running cost becomes considerably less than with gasoline. In fact, it becomes extremely economical.
3. Poorer fuel availability in rural areas. You will find it easier to buy a gallon of Coleman Fuel than a two-pound canister of propane in most rural areas. Also, the sizes of the coupling that join gas canister to stove are not universal among all manufacturers.

With a gasoline stove, more attention must be paid to safety. This is mainly because of the possibilities of spilled fuel and flare-ups. If the generator is good and you know how to use your gasoline stove perfectly, flare-ups should not occur. But the fact is that flare-ups do occur -- I witness them every year in campgrounds. If you'll just locate your stove far enough away from tent, dining fly, clothing, etc., the occasional flare-up you might get will be unlikely to hurt anything. But it would be even better to learn how to use your gasoline stove precisely so that flare-ups don't occur. This just takes practice, and the common sense to read and follow the manufacturer's directions carefully.

[Read The CAUTIONS for Canister-Fuel Stoves](#)

[\*\*For Safety and Tips for Using Gas\*\*](#)

[Click Here](#)

- **BUTANE** (pressurized) is sold only in disposable cartridges. It is one of the more expensive fuels, but the cylinders are considerably lighter than propane, convenient, available in most places, and burn clean and hot, so maintenance is rarely required. Due to evaporative cooling, cooking time is limited to 15-20 minutes before output starts to drop. As fuel changes from a liquid to a burnable gas, the temperature of the remaining liquid in the cylinder drops, and condensation or frost forms on the outside. When liquid butane's temperature drops below freezing, it will not vaporize, or burn. Isobutane has a lower evaporation temperature than butane (12<sup>°</sup>F versus 30<sup>°</sup>F), which extends the cooking time on one canister.

- **ISOBUTANE** (pressurized) Butane and twenty percent propane which is sold in light steel canisters. It has replaced straight butane since it ignites in outside air temperatures down to about 15° F (-10° C). It is the most convenient and clean-burning fuel for normal conditions since you just strike a match and turn on the stove.

Isobutane is mainly sold in two incompatible formats: canisters manufactured by Camping Gaz-Bluet, a French company that dominates the gas stove market, and more or less industry standard canisters sold by EPI (British), Primus (Swedish), MSR and Coleman (American), and Olicamp (Chinese).

Gaz-Bluet fuel canisters are practically everywhere in continental Europe, widely available in outdoor shops in the U.S., Canada, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, and somewhat available in sixty-two other countries. In France, where the canisters are also widely used for lanterns and heaters, you can cheaply buy them in grocery stores.

Industry standard canisters are slightly more available than Gaz-Bluet canisters in Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. In my overall experience, however, most shops that carry industry standard canisters also have Camping-Gaz, while the reverse is less true.

### **Liquid- fuel**

This stove type is good if you are going to be using the stove a lot. Your best bet is to buy a stove that can use both unleaded gas and stove fuel (also known as dual fuel).

### ***The advantage***

A few gallons of unleaded gas or Coleman fuel will last you a very long time. This is good for long camping trips where you're not close to any supply stores. Just keep the pressure pumped up to keep the flame burning properly and you are good to go.

### ***The drawbacks***

You have to pack the fuel which can be messy and smelly if it spills. You'll need to fill your stove a few hours before you use it. A small funnel will make it easier.

Make sure you fill your stove at least 20 yards away from any

campfire, tent or food.

Liquid gas stoves mostly burn white gas or its close cousins, Coleman fuel and naphtha, all of which are inexpensive and clean-burning. At subzero temperatures, these stoves burn hotter and more efficiently than do canister stoves. They also work well in winds and high altitudes. And for long trips they have a weight advantage over canister stoves: one full fuel tank weighs less than multiple canisters containing an equivalent amount of fuel. Another advantage is that many of these stoves (but not all) can burn other liquid fuels like automobile gas, diesel, jet or aviation fuel, kerosene, and Stoddard solvent. This makes these stoves the best choice when traveling in parts of the world (particularly developing countries) where the types of available fuels are limited.

However, there are disadvantages. Liquid gas stoves are more expensive and harder to operate than canister stoves, and they require cleaning. They're also larger and heavier, making them less than ideal for short trips or super-lightweight backpacking.

- **WHITE GAS ("Coleman") Fuel** You will encounter all the fuels named above such as propane, butane, white gas ("Coleman fuel"), unleaded gasoline, or kerosene. However, I recommend only two real choices - propane or white gas ("Coleman Fuel").

The white gas stoves will produce the most heat of any camping stoves. It burns cleanly without any odor or effect on food taste. If you spill the fuel it will evaporate very quickly and will not leave an odor. This is very important - sooner or later some fuel will spill on your hand or clothes, maybe even on your table. No problem though.

Many of the white gas stoves now come in a "dual fuel" version.

This will allow you to use unleaded auto gas. Many campers use the auto gas and are satisfied with it. However, if you spill it or get it on your hands, you will have a hard time getting rid of the odor.

*(check your hands the next time you fill up at the self service gas station)*

I recommend using only the white gas in the dual fuel stoves,

unless you run out and can't buy any - then use a little unleaded gas.

This is the advantage to the dual fuel stoves.

The main advantage of the unleaded fuel over white gas is cost.

Auto gas is about \$1.50 per gallon, while white gas is about \$4.50.

I feel the extra cost for the few gallons of white gas used each year is worth paying so you get the cleanliness of this fuel.

(Coleman fuel or camp fuel) is not sold in bulk and is the most widely available fuel in America. It burns efficiently in all temperatures, providing a lot of cooking time for its weight, occasionally needs priming, and is one of the cleanest burning fuels, which means minimal stove maintenance. If you spill the fuel it will evaporate very quickly leaving no residue and will not leave an odor.

The white gas stoves will produce the most heat of any camping stoves. It burns cleanly without any odor or effect on food taste.

- **UNLEADED GAS** is sold in bulk, but should be used only when absolutely necessary since it is volatile and emits fumes. It is readily available here and abroad, and costs about that of white gas, which is why the multi-fuel stoves (which accept unleaded gasoline) are popular.
- **KEROSENE** is sold in bulk throughout the world, and burns efficiently. Slightly heavier than white gas, it will not ignite as easily, and requires priming. It is messy to handle, smelly, and leaves an oily residue so doesn't burn as cleanly as other fuels. This means more frequent maintenance.
- **ALCOHOL** (Denatured) mixes with water and is safe for use on boats since, if spilled, it will evaporate and won't ignite readily.

A less common liquid-gas stove is the alcohol stove. Alcohol burns clean, and its low flammability makes it safer than other fuels. At the same time, its invisible flame can be dangerous if one doesn't know the alcohol is ignited. Also,

alcohol has a cool flame and doesn't burn as efficiently as other liquid fuels.

It is often used to prime stoves using other fuel.

This fuel is expensive.

### **Other scenario's to consider**

#### **Unleaded Gas**

Available wherever modern cars run. Additives in fuel are noxious (injurious to health). Stoves and pans will require frequent cleaning.

#### **Leaded Gas**

Produces very noxious fumes, not recommended as a fuel. Will clog the jets on stoves quickly.

#### **Kerosene**

Available worldwide, this is the chief heating and lighting fuel for developing countries. Cheap, but often of such a low grade it should first be filtered through a cloth. More difficult to light than gasoline, especially in cold weather. Usually the stove must be "primed"--the burner is initially heated with a flame from preheating paste, gasoline, or paper. Kerosene is also dirtier, smellier, and smokier than white gas, and it blackens pots.

#### **Jet Fuel and Stoddard Solvent**

Similar to kerosene.

#### **Diesel**

Stove combustion byproducts of this heavy fuel are noxious, enormous, and immediately cancel out ten years of broccoli.

### **[Read The CAUTIONS for Liquid-Fuel Stoves](#)**

#### **Other Types of Fuel for certain stoves**

Other stoves use wood or fuel tablets. Wood stoves can burn twigs, bark, pine cones, scrap wood or charcoal. The main advantage is not having to carry your own fuel - just collect it from the forest. The disadvantage is that wood is useless after being soaked with several days of rain, so you may have to pack fuel after all. Also, these stoves cannot be used during burning bans.

The Esbit stove burns Esbit solid fuel tablets, which burn hot



and clean. The half-ounce. tablets light with a match, last about 15 minutes each, and can be blown out for later use. They are not affected by the cold and burn well even at high altitudes. The stove is 3.25 oz. and folds to about the size of a deck of cards, making it the choice of many lightweight backpackers.

However, the stove requires a windscreen to maintain efficiency.

### **Different Stoves for Different Kinds of Camping**

It's been explained that certain types of stoves and fuels are best for certain types of trips - short trips, cold-weather camping, camping in developing countries, and so on.

But a more rudimentary division can be made:  
stoves intended for backpacking,  
and stoves intended for car camping.

### **Stoves for Backpacking**

Backpacking stoves -  
lightweight, compact models that fit in a backpack -  
usually have only one burner and weigh less than 2 pounds without fuel. Some weigh just a few ounces, making them ideal for lightweight backpacking.

If you are backpacking a single burner stove is a good way to go.

They are lightweight, can tuck away in your pack and great when cooking one course or one skillet meals.

These stoves are a wonderful value for your camping dollar and will last a long time if properly cared for. Peak 1 and Coleman have some awesome single burner stoves. So do Campinggaz and Texsport.



Forget about killer sunsets or jaw-dropping summit views. No backcountry event will grab your attention quite like a backpacking stove that has burst into flames and is sending a pool of flaming white gas over your campsite. Among the gear you take into the wilds, a stove is probably the most dangerous item you'll possess short of a rifle in polar bear country.

And it's by far the most temperamental.

Follow this hard-won advice for using a lightweight backcountry stove safely and for ensuring that it fires up when you need it.

### **Word to the wise:**

Always test-run your stove at home before a backcountry trip.

This advice applies doubly to liquid-fuel stoves.

### **Liquid- Fuel Stoves**

White-gas, or liquid-fuel, stoves are much fussier than canister stoves, hence they need extra TLC:

1. Carry a maintenance kit and know what to do with it. It helps to tote along the instruction manual, preferably in a zipper-lock plastic bag.
2. If the fuel line can be disassembled, periodically clean it with a rag dipped in white gas. Use the rag and gas to wipe carbon residue off the burner; otherwise it may get into the jet.

White gas breaks down gradually while in storage, yielding balky stove performance.

Replace months-old gas.

Also, if you've stored old white gas or a dirtier fuel like kerosene in a fuel tank or bottle, rinse it with fresh white gas.

Liquid-fuel stoves also have a tendency to clog or otherwise go on the fritz. But with a repair kit and a touch of MacGyver-like knowledge you can fix these stoves in the field.

Here's how to troubleshoot the most common maladies:

1. **Weak or non-existent flame:** Usually this is due to a clogged jet. Some newer stoves have a built-in wire for cleaning the jet. Otherwise, poke carbon residue out of the

jet with a wire. If that doesn't work, unscrew and remove the jet, soak it in white gas, and wipe it clean.

2. **Leaky pump:** Try lubing the rubber O-ring with maintenance-kit oil or saliva. If that fails, replace the O-ring.

3. **Fuel bottle won't pressurize:** Same remedy as for a leaky pump.

4. **Eyebrow- singeing flare- ups:** Probably the result of over priming. Prime just enough to squirt fuel from the jet for about three seconds. Turn the stove off and light that fuel, then wait until the fuel nearly burns away and the yellow flame is barely lapping the burner before slowly turning up the gas. You can also let the flame burn out completely, then open the fuel valve slightly and hold a match to the burner.

### ***Fuel Choice Tip***

*With a multifuel stove, burn white gas whenever possible; it won't clog your stove as quickly as will kerosene, gasoline, and other fuels.*

### **Canister Stoves**

Canister, or cartridge, stoves are virtually foolproof and maintenance-free. Still, some sensible precautions will keep them that way.

- Clean away spilled food, dirt, and mud from your stove. Store stove in its stuff sack.
- Guard against damaging the all-important valve connecting the fuel canister or fuel line to the burner. Always attach fuel canisters with care, and cushion the stove from potential damage while in your pack or in transit to the trailhead.
- Some canisters are designed to stand upright during stove operation; others lie flat. Know which type you have.
- Avoid jostling or tipping the canister while cooking, which can cause the stove to flare up.

### ***Cold Weather Tip***

*In below-freezing conditions, keep canister stoves running hot by warming the cartridge with your gloved hands or standing*

*it in an inch of cool (never hot) water. Better yet, keep a spare canister in a warm place, like stuffed between your long undershirt and your jacket, turn off the stove, swap canisters, and fire it up again.*

**Click on image for enlarged view and description**



Coleman® Fuel or kerosene



Coleman® Fuel



16.4 oz. Coleman® propane cylinder



Coleman® fuel or unleaded gasoline



Coleman® fuel or unleaded gasoline



1.1 pints of Coleman® Fuel or unleaded gas



16.4 oz. Coleman® propane cylinder



Coleman® fuel, unleaded gasoline or kerosene

### **Stoves for Car Camping / Family Camping**

Car camping stoves are much larger and much heavier than backpacking stoves. The tabletop models weigh around 10 pounds without fuel, while freestanding models can weigh several times more. They usually run on propane or white gas, have multiple burners, and burn hotter than backpacking stoves.

They also burn fuel faster.

When planning a family camping adventure, you may want to consider a two or three burner stove.

The extra burner(s) will come in handy when cooking larger meals. Also, most multi burner stoves can use (liquid) unleaded fuel, standard Coleman stove fuel, or propane.

Brands like Coleman typically offer a couple versions of each two-burner stove, with the difference being the space for the pots. The "standard" sizes are adequate for most small families, and with a little creativity and planning, can function well for up to ten persons.

This size can be a good choice for larger families if there will be a campfire which could be used to heat some dishes. Otherwise, you might want to try the extra large size stove, as it will accommodate larger pots and may even put out more heat.

It will be easier for your first few trips if the stove has at least two burners. This will allow you to use nearly all the same food as at home. With two burners, you can have a typical two-pot meal, like pasta on one burner and sauce on the other.

You can even add a third pot by heating up one dish and setting it aside while you heat the others.

**Click on Image for enlarged view & description**

**2 Burner**



3.5 pints of Coleman® Fuel or unleaded gas

**3 Burner**



3.5 pints of Coleman® Fuel or unleaded gas

**2 Burner**



16.4 oz. Coleman® propane cylinder

**3 Burner**



**2 Burner**



16.4 oz. Coleman® propane cylinder

**3 Burner**



16.4 oz. Coleman® propane cylinder



20 lb. propane tank



16.4 oz. Coleman® propane cylinder

## OPERATION AND USE

**PACK** fuel bottles in zip-lock freezer bags, away from food.

Protect your stove, and keep it clean, with cloth shoe protectors, or trim off a pair of 2 liter soda bottles to make an armored travel case. Also take a cleaning/maintenance kit that includes a jet-cleaning needle, pipe cleaners, and thin wire for cleaning debris out of hoses and other hard-to-reach areas. Test your stove before you leave and check your fuel canister to ensure it's full and intact.

**OPERATE** your stove outside, not inside a tent, or anywhere else with poor ventilation which could lead to fire or

asphyxiation. Don't fill the fuel tank up to the brim. Leaving a small air space will help prevent spills and ensure that the stove holds pressure better. Place a stove base (a small square of closed-cell foam wrapped in duct tape, half of a license plate, or a piece of plywood) under your stove to improve stability and help conserve fuel. Once you are sure your stove is stable, check all fuel lines, valves and connections for leaks before lighting.

**PRESSURIZED BUTANE CYLINDERS** require special care. Do not change or unseat cartridges when a stove or lantern is burning. Check to make sure detached cartridges aren't leaking before striking matches inside a tent.

To help reduce or control evaporative cooling, you can:

1. Place the canister (while in use) upright in a pot filled with an inch of cold water.
2. Warm the canister with your hands while cooking. (Don't wrap anything around it though, that will just keep the cold in.)
3. Alternate between 2 or more canisters when cooking.

**PRIMING** is necessary with some fuels in order to preheat the burner to a temperature at which the liquid fuel will vaporize. This can be done with your regular fuel, or a different one and simply involves burning off a small amount of the fuel in a priming cup located near the fuel jet.

**STORE** your fuel in airtight containers, and empty the fuel tank/canister after your trip. If exposed to air, fuel will degrade, discolor, and produce sediment that will affect stove performance. Leave at least 2 inches of air space in the container to allow for expansion. Uncap the empty canister so condensation can evaporate.

**TRANSPORTATION** of fuel and fuel containers is generally not allowed (filled or unfilled) by the airlines.

### **CLEANING**

No matter how dirty it gets, never use oven cleaner on your camp stove top. It will burnish it for life & it won't be looking shiny anymo. Baked on goo is only gonna come off with elbow grease & a good scrubber. Even the steel wool pads leave a

weird mark on this stubborn metal surface

Make a place for it! Put all your outdoor gear in the same spot in the garage or closet. That way you know where everything is, right? The headache of preparing for a camp trip will be minimal once you get organized.

## **A Word of Caution**

Do not use a stove inside of your tent.

Not only do tents melt or [catch fire](#), they also fill up quickly with deadly [carbon monoxide](#) fumes. Remember that stoves need oxygen to burn, and you need it to breathe.

Only use your stove where there's enough oxygen for both.

## **Safety with Gas**

[See also Emergency Fire Procedures.](#)

### **Precautions to be taken when handling gas.**

Gas in a canister is stored as a liquid, so it is important to keep the cylinders upright at all times, especially when being transported.

The valves should also be protected from damage while in transit.

When setting up a kitchen area, place the gas bottles outside so that if there is any leakage it will dissipate rather than build up in the tent. Use plenty of hose from the regulator to the appliance so that any bends are smooth.

When renewing hose give it a little extra length to allow for cutting the ends of if they split, but not too much that will tangle. Use jubilee clips to tighten the hose at each end. Tight is enough, too tight will crack the hose. If the hose is tight going on a drop of washing up liquid will help ease it on.

It's good practice to have a plastic utility box that contains spare regulators, hose clips and a screwdriver. Assemble and dismantle all hose and regulators for every journey. This prevents the regulators from being damaged in transit, and also ensures that every connection is inspected before use.

Check for leakage by placing a drop of washing up liquid on every connection. It will bubble if there is a leak, and if this is the case it should be removed from service immediately and suitable repairs or replacements effected.

Remember, never test for a gas leak with a naked flame.

When changing bottles, always turn off all naked flames (*including pilot lights where applicable*), and this should always be done outside and away from tents. Good practice should dictate that a torch (*with charged batteries!*) is kept nearby in case you have to turn everything off in a hurry. Make sure to turn off the bottles last thing at night, if not done so after every meal. Never leave gas appliances unattended when lit. Screw type regulators are left hand threads and should not be over tightened. If you have a leak here do not try to tighten further but check the seal, have spares in utility box, or wrap PTFE tape around the thread.

As with hoses, check for leakage by placing a drop of washing up liquid on every connection. It will bubble if there is a leak, and if this is the case it should be removed from service immediately and suitable repairs or replacements effected.

For the small personal type cookers and lanterns there are generally two types, a self sealing and a pieced canister.

Ensure that the valve is turned off before replacing a canister. The self-sealing type of gas canister are safer and can be removed part full. This also enables the same canister to be used on a cooker and lantern, such as on a hike.

The pieced canister type cannot be removed once fitted.

To fit a new canister, this should be done outside to ensure that any escaped gas does not build up inside an enclosed space, such as a tent. Firstly, ensure there are no naked flames in the vicinity, that the canister is empty, and the valve turned off. Unscrew the appliance from the body. Unclip the canister restraints. Fit the new canister to the body ensuring the restraints are firmly fastened. Now screw the appliance back on. At the moment of piecing there will be a sudden gas escape, and as soon as this happens firmly screw up tight and this will stop (providing this is done quickly and there are no naked flames there are no serious dangers). Ensure the escaped gas has dissipated before lighting. On the smaller cylinders the regulator has to be screwed to the  
bottle -

this is a left hand thread. So be careful.

**There are different types of gas -**

Make sure you have the right type of gas, valve, regulator and



other equipment, as the items do not necessarily match.

## **In an emergency**

Ok, having followed all the guidelines, the unthinkable happens and a gas pipe punctures and flames.

What do we do?

The most important thing is personal safety, do not compromise it.

Clear the area of all personnel immediately, and make things safe if possible without a delay (ie: if a pan of something is cooking on the other ring remove the pan, but do not stop to turn off the burner).

Never attempt to move the bottle, as this may make things worse, and if it explodes when you are carrying the bottle you would probably not survive to regret it.

You should not turn the gas off at the bottle. A flame in tubing is controllable as long as the pressure stays up.

The pressure pushing the gas out of the hole prevents the flame retreating up the tube and igniting the gas bottle.

A complete severance of the tube would cause a flame thrower type effect.

Don't be tempted to think that you can disconnect it and be quicker than the flame can travel up the pipe -

**you're not!**

The best thing that you can do in any emergency involving gas is to firstly make sure everyone is well clear of the emergency (in case the gas bottle explodes), and call for emergency assistance.

The next thing is to call the Fire Department.

Never be tempted to deal with it yourself, as with many things untrained hands can make things worse than doing nothing.

## **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning with Camping Equipment**



The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) warns consumers that each year there are about 30 deaths and 450 injuries because of carbon monoxide poisoning from the use of portable camping heaters, lanterns, or stoves inside tents, campers, and vehicles. Follow these guidelines to prevent this colorless, odorless gas from poisoning you and your family.

- 📌 Do not use portable heaters or lanterns while sleeping in enclosed areas such as tents, campers, and other vehicles. This is especially important at high altitudes, where the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning is increased.
- 📌 Know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, and confusion. Carbon monoxide reduces the blood's ability to carry oxygen. Low blood oxygen levels can result in loss of consciousness and death.
- 📌 See a doctor if you or a member of your family develops cold or flu-like symptoms while camping. Carbon monoxide poisoning, which can easily be mistaken for a cold or flu, is often detected too late.
- 📌 Alcohol consumption and drug use increase the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- 📌 Carbon monoxide is especially toxic to mother and child during pregnancy, infants, the elderly, smokers, and people with blood or circulatory system problems, such as anemia, or heart disease.

# CAMPING OVENS



## [How to Make a Campfire Oven from a Cardboard Box](#)

### **The Dutch Oven / Cast Iron Pot**

Cast iron camp ovens are fun and a time-proven way to cook a variety of food including breads, roasts, stews and casseroles.

Camp ovens come in various sizes and a good one will last a lifetime if cared for.

Dutch oven cooking has survived from the days of the open hearth, and flourishes still. When Lewis and Clark made their pioneering trek to the Northwest in 1805, they listed the Dutch oven as one of their most valued pieces of equipment. Legend has it that the Dutch oven was actually invented in colonial times by Paul Revere.

### **Indoor or Outdoor Dutch Oven?**

There are two basic kinds of Dutch Ovens.  
This is how to distinguish between the two.

There are two basic types of Dutch Ovens: indoor and outdoor.

***The indoor Dutch Oven*** is intended for use in a kitchen oven.  
It is not intended for use outdoors on a fire.

***The outdoor Dutch Oven***, on the other hand is designed for outdoor use.

The outdoor Dutch Oven has four main features which are easy to identify that make it the ideal tool for outdoor baking: the legs, the lid, the fit, and the size.

## **The Legs**

For most outdoor Dutch Ovens, there are three or four legs attached to the bottom of the oven. This oven will be placed on top of burning coals. The legs prevent the oven from smashing the coals and allow the coals to get the air they need to burn.

## **The Lid**

The lid of the outdoor Dutch Oven should also have a raised lip around the lip. After the food is placed in the oven to cook and the lid is placed on the oven, burning coals are placed on top of the oven to heat the lid. If you do not have heat on the lid, items inside are just cooked from the bottom, not baked. This lip on the lid keeps the coals on the lid and prevents any ashes from falling on the food when the food is checked.

## **The Fit**

The lid of an outdoor Dutch Oven fits securely on the top of the oven. The lid should trap most of the air inside the oven. The lid should not be tight enough cause pressure to build up inside when liquids are boiled inside, but is tight enough to prevent heat from escaping rapidly.

## **The Size**

On the whole, indoor Dutch Ovens are smaller than outdoor Dutch Ovens. Outdoor ovens will hold significantly more food.

## **Cooking On A Dutch Oven**

Dutch ovens can take your campfire provisions to a new dimension,

and you do not have to be a gourmet to pull it off.

Anyone who can start a fire and follow a recipe can perform miracles with a Dutch oven.

Position your Dutch oven over a bed of briquettes, place more on the lid, and presto, it bakes like an actual oven. Baking at 350 F requires five to eight briquettes evenly distributed under the oven and 12 to 16 on the lid. When using more than one Dutch oven, you can stack the second on top of the first, and so on, without the necessity of spreading more briquettes on the ground.

If your campsite mandates low impact, spread some aluminum foil under the coals and pack them out in a fireproof container.

Experience is the best judge when deciding when a Dutch oven meal is ready. As one river guide put it, "it falls somewhere between instinct and a sense of smell." Using your watch is a safe way to bake and always keep in mind that if you snooze, you lose. Avoid lifting the lid to look at the food. Like your oven at home, opening it up loses precious heat. Each peek can cost you five to 10 minutes.

### **Purchasing A Dutch Oven**

Most camp stores carry good quality ovens but look for one that has a strong handle and a lid with a large lip to hold the coals.

If you go to lots of garage sales and flea markets you will occasionally find used cast iron for sale. The prices will vary as will the quality and cleanliness of the items. The nice thing about used cast iron is that the cleanliness when purchased is not really important.

Don't pay a premium for seasoned clean cast iron; you will be getting it to the bare metal any way.

Rust is **not** something to worry about either. Do check to see if it is almost rusted through - that would be an indication of an unusable piece.

The real killer of cast iron is cracks.

Look all over the item for any cracks. Popular places for cracks include: the lid edges, the lid handle, the rim, and around the legs. If there are any cracks at all, put the pieces down and walk away.

It is possible for an expert to weld cast iron so it can be used in cooking again, but it is a specialized skill and unlikely to be worth the cost and effort. For this same reason, avoid any cast iron pieces that show signs of welding.

They may crack when heated.

Another common problem is missing pieces, especially the lid. If there is no lid, avoid the piece, as you are not likely to find the mate and no other lid will fit tight enough.

Sometimes a piece of cast iron is exposed to chemicals. Radiator water comes to mind.

I would ask if I see any unusual stains. If a poison contacted the interior, I would thank them for their honesty and walk away. If they can't identify the stain, do the same thing.

Cast iron is porous and retained poisons, chemicals, and materials could affect the food.

Don't spend too much on a used oven unless it is an unusual size or shape. I have seen indoor Dutch Ovens go for \$8 - \$12. Usual prices for used outdoor ovens are in the range of \$30 - \$45. I have seen a good new 12" outdoor oven for \$30, but they can go as high as \$60

. The larger the piece, the more expensive it will be whether it is new or old.

Part of the reason for the strange pricing is the cast iron collectors and perception of what the collectors will pay. Be careful even when buying new. One company makes outdoor ovens without legs. I have seen malformations in the bottom of cheap ovens that almost looked like cracks and could become cracks in the future.

If possible, open the box and look inside before you buy it.

Before using a camp oven and to prevent rust it needs to be cleaned and "seasoned".

There are three tricks to having good clean cast iron:

1. Getting it clean.
2. Seasoning it
3. Keeping it seasoned.

The first step with a new cast iron camp oven is to peel off any labels and then wash the oven and lid in warm water only, rinse and dry completely.

If there is food that is thick and baked on try an old screwdriver, putty knife or paint scraper.

Some people have good luck with cast iron pieces by running them through the self clean cycle of a kitchen oven.

*(I have not tried this, so you on your own if something goes wrong.)*

Do **NOT** do this with an aluminum oven.

You can also use sand paper, scouring pads, and aluminum foil.

### Seasoning a Camp Oven

*All new camp ovens need to be seasoned before use.*

Once your cast iron is clean, you need to season it. To season it properly you need to make sure it is completely clean.

Even new ovens need to be scrubbed down to metal before there first seasoning. When the piece is clean, rinse it off with water and dry it completely. Some scrubbing pads contain soap, this must be removed. You may want to let it sit in a warm oven for a couple of minutes if needed to make sure it is completely dry.

Coat the cast with a thin layer of vegetable oil.

**Do not use lard, grease, margarine or any oil that contains salt.**

Do not use a spray in coating the oven but rather use oil soaked in a paper towel.

Do not put much on; the oil should not drip when the piece is turned over. Pop it upside down into your kitchen oven at 350 degrees for an hour. Some people suggest two hours and some suggest removing it every 30 minutes and putting a second layer of oil on it. I find that adding layers of oil tends to cause build up and drips. Because I recommend using a liner pan almost all the time, I don't worry too much about extra seasoning.

You will probably need to repeat the process for the oven to obtain the desired uniform black patina that provides the non-stick qualities and protects your oven from rust.

### **CARE OF YOUR OVEN**

Avoid at first acidic foods like tomatoes and fruit and water the first few times you use the cast iron which removes the "seasoning" otherwise you will have to re-season the oven.

After cooking remove the lid and do not use the oven as a food storage vessel.

In cleaning the oven **NEVER** use detergents, they will enter the pores of the oven and you will forever have the lingering taste of soap. Never use a hard wire brush unless you intend to re-season the oven. Simply scrape out the remaining food and clean the oven with hot water and a natural fibre brush and allow to completely dry.

To store your oven, lightly oil all surfaces, place a piece of

paper towel inside and store in a dry place with the lid ajar. The seasoning will improve with each use. It's a good idea to make a bag or a box to transport your oven.

**NEVER** pour cold water into a hot oven as it may crack.

## USEFUL TOOLS

There are a few essential tools for cast iron camp ovens.

The first is a long strong hook to lift the lid of your camp oven to check on cooking progress and to remove the oven from the coals. You can make your own from thick wire or you may find one in a good camp store. They are usually sold as tent peg pullers, are 60 - 70cm long and come with a wooden handle.

You will also need long handled tongs, a pot scraper (a spatula or putty knife), oven mitt or heavy pot holder, a small whisk broom (not nylon) to remove the ashes from the lid, paper towels and oil.

Cooking with coals from the camp fire is fine but it will take a bit of practice to get enough coals in the right place to avoid burning and to cook the meal to perfection. A great alternative to camp fire coals is heat beads (see Feb magazine). They are easier to control, hold their heat longer and you can use them to practice the art of cast iron camp oven cooking at home.

**When storing a camp oven, remember to smear inside and out with vegetable oil to prevent rusting.**





## Stove Extras

Some extra things you will find helpful when using your stove are a windscreen, a starter, a stand, and a fuel funnel (if using white gas).

### Folding Stand

Even though many campgrounds provide picnic tables, you might want to consider a folding stand for your stove. This leaves you with more room on the table for preparing the food, eating, and having the kids play games while waiting for dinner.

**BUTANE LIGHTER** or *The stove starter* is a long handled sparker that you use to light the burners. You can use a match, but the sparker is much easier and, I believe, much safer.



If you get a propane stove, get one with the ignition system built in.

These convenient Butane Lighters are so easy to use for lighting fires; the refillable ones are your best bet for close to the same price at your local drugstore.

Cans of butane can be found at most liquor stores or your local smoke shop.

### THE OUTFIT

Even though many campgrounds provide picnic tables, you might want to consider a folding stand for your stove. This leaves you with more room on the table for preparing the food, eating, and having the kids play games while waiting for dinner.



[Click on Image](#) [for enlarged view and description](#)

There is also your Chuck Box



Perhaps, you would like to build your own Chuck Box!

[Clicking here](#)

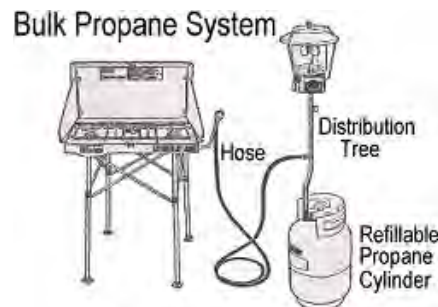
or

on one of the two links below:



## DISTRIBUTION TREE

If you do a lot of camping, a refillable tank may be a wise investment. No cartridges to dispose of and you can run your stove and lantern off the same tank by using a distribution tree and an 8 foot high pressure extension hose. Attach the tree to the tank, run your hose to the stove and put your lantern on top of the tree or you can purchase the optional attachment that will supply propane to a lantern from the same tank. Now you will have a light in your "kitchen."



This may be more than you really want for starting out. But if you start with the disposable-bottle type propane stove, you can grow to the tank version later.

## WINDSCREENS

The heat your stove puts out can be blown away making it take a long time to heat up your meal. Most larger stoves come with built-in back and side windscreens.

You will be glad you have them on cool, rainy and windy days.

Windscreens help to keep a stove burning strong in all kinds of weather conditions, reduce fuel consumption and the chance of flaring, and can decrease the boiling time by 20-50%. You can make your own by cutting them out of disposable aluminum pie tins or cookie sheets. (Store them wrapped around your fuel bottle.) When using full-coverage, wraparound windscreens on tank-under stoves, be careful to monitor how much heat reflects down onto the fuel tank or cartridge because overheating is dangerous.

### **HEAT EXCHANGER (MSR)**

traps and redirects hot gases up the side of the cookpot to increase cooking efficiency by up to 25%, and is particularly effective in cold and wind.

### **BAKEPACKER**

is a grid and cylinder structure that fits in your cookpot. Your food (omelet, bread, rice, freeze dried meals etc.) is cooked in a plastic bag that sits on top of the grid over 1" of boiling water. Because it is all prepared and cooked in a plastic bag (Glad 1 gallon size work well), it is not necessary to clean the pot. There are two sizes.

### **POTS AND PANS**



The right cookware and some preparation can go a long way to preventing culinary disasters while out camping.

One could probably argue that cookware has one of the widest price ranges of field equipment that you can buy. A small collapsible mess kit can be found in department stores for as little as \$5 that are made from aluminum. On the other end of the scale personal cooking kits can be found for \$100 or more.

*That is a 20X swing in price for two sets that basically do the same thing!* A good price range for a quality cookware is from \$35 to \$60.

A flexible cookware set should come with a frying pan (*that may double as a lid*), two pots, one small from 1 to 1.5 quarts and another larger, around 2 quarts, a lid, and a stuff sack.

You don't have to spend \$50+ on a duplicate set of expensive camping cook wear. Your local discount stores have an adequate selection of inexpensive pots & pans. You can also get utensils, pans, and helpful items at your local thrift store or army surplus shop.

### ***"use old pots & pans"***

Pots and pans do not have to be purchased specifically for camping, but if you are backpacking, aluminum or stainless steel nesting pots give you a compact, lightweight setup that can often store your stove, nested in the middle.

There are also lightweight, nesting sets for family campers. Blackened pots with tight-fitting lids can reduce the length of time it takes to boil water by about 20-30%. You can spray paint them with heat-resistant, flat black stove paint (***outside only***) if you want to speed up the process.

### **Black Exterior Finish**

A black exterior finish offers several advantages over other pots. First it is easier to clean, as your cookware is used some staining from soot is inevitable. The black outside finish helps hide this accumulation over time. Second a black exterior absorbs more heat, boosting cooking times. Because the finish is coated or sprayed on, continued abuse in the field can scratch the finish.

*You know that awful black soot that gets all over the bottom of your pots and pans when you cook over an open campfire?*

*You can avoid the messy cleanup if you use one of those aluminum foil dishes or pie pan under your pot.*

*The foil transmits heat and collects most of the soot!*

The type of camping you'll be doing and the number of people in the group largely determine what type of cookware you should get. For long-distance backpacking, weight and space is at a premium. A small, lightweight pot, a plate, a cup and a spoon will suffice if you are camping alone. If camping with a companion, pack a larger pot for the both of you. Frisbees make for lightweight plates that you and your companion can rinse off and play with after dinner. For more campers, an even larger pot is needed.

For trips where weight is less a concern, consider packing a full set of cookware and utensils. Cook sets rise in price with increasing pieces, sizes, features, and quality of materials. The most basic is a personal mess kit that can be bought for under \$10. These are comprised of a plastic cup that fits inside a small pot with lid, all of which is sandwiched between a pan and a plate/bowl. The handle of the pan swivels in to serve as a clasp to hold the kit together. More extensive cook sets include multiple plates and cups, several pots nested within each other and a kettle for boiling water and brewing coffee.

Other cookware can be bought individually or in sets of like kinds, such as sets of skillets or pots.

Of course cookware sets can come with a lot more. So read on to learn everything there is to know about cookware for camping and backpacking:

## **WHAT CAN BE INCLUDED**

### **Frying Pan**

Some cookware sets will come with a frying pan. These low sided, larger pans are useful for cooking a wide variety of products including meat, and pancakes. If you like to fish, having a frying pan allows you to sauté that trout you caught in olive oil instead of roasting it on a fire. Due to the increased surface area, with a lid over the top, you can boil water faster in a frying pan than a pot, especially if you are using a fire versus a small stove. A majority of cookware sets come with a frying pan. A good size to look for is from 7-1/2 inches to 9 inches. Smaller is pretty functionally useless and larger will probably be too bulky.

### **Pots**

Except for the most basic of mess kits, your cookware set should come with a pot. Pot sizes that are common are 1 quart (liter), 1.5 quart (liter), 2 quart (liter) and 3 quart (liter). Some sets will come with smaller and some with larger, but these are pretty standard sizes, not just in camping cookware, but in your kitchen too. When looking for a cookware set consider sets that have a couple of different pot sizes included. Also, the pots (as well as the frying pan) should nest into each other. This will help save room in your backpack.

The other benefit to having multiple sized pots is you can mix and match depending on the length of your trip and the kind of cooking you will be doing. Going on a solo hike for a weekend? Then grab your 1.5-quart pot, put your stove in it and you are ready to go! Planning to do some car camping with the family? Then bring the whole set for more versatility and for cooking a couple of different things at the same time.

### **Measuring *and/or* Drinking Cup**

Some cookware sets come with a plastic measure and/or drinking cup. For the most part these are pretty useless. The standard plastic cup that seems to come with these cookware sets only holds eight ounces, not even enough to mix a cup of coffee or hot chocolate, and the graduation of measurements, well they leave a little to be desired. Also the thin plastic won't keep your cold drinks cold or your warm drinks warm for a long period of time. What is our recommendation? Get a collapsible cup that can hold around 16 ounces, and read on for a trick to measuring and lose the cup.

### **Kettle**

A few larger cookware sets can come with a coffeepot. Basically a tall kettle with a lip for pouring the pot can be used for boiling water. With instant coffee, tea, or hot chocolate you can make a large amount for the masses and keep it warm by the fire. A kettle is helpful if you are doing car camping or walk in camping. Going into the backcountry? Consider using a pot to cut down on weight and bulk.

### **Lids**

Lids are a must have with your cookware set for a number of reasons. First, a pot with a lid will cook food faster, and boil water in a shorter period of time. Lids also help keep out soot out of your food from the heat source you are using. Cookware sets that have lids that serve double duty like frying pans or plates should be strongly considered. By serving double duty they help save room in your pack and increase the versatility of your set. A well designed cookware set might have a 2 quart pot and a seven to eight inch frying pan that serves as a lid for the 2 quart pot. Lids should fit snug and seal the pot, aiding in faster cooking.

An ideal cookware set that could be used across the full range of camping might include a frying pan and three pots ranging in size from 1.5 quarts to 3 quarts. Two of the pots will have lids, and the largest third pots lid serves double duty as a frying pan.

All of the pots nest into each other for easy storage.

### **Aluminum**

is the most common cookware material.

It's very light and conducts heat very well, making cooking quite efficient.

Most personal mess kits and many larger cook sets are made of this material, which is inexpensive and lightweight.

However, aluminum has several disadvantages.

Health concerns have arisen however, primarily concerning certain acidic foods that may react with an uncoated aluminum surface.

Heat can oxidize inferior aluminum, creating a chalky white residue that is unhealthy to ingest, and aluminum reacts with acidic food, altering the taste of the food. Aluminum traps heat, so if it is removed from the heat the food will continue to cook (or burn).

Aluminum is also soft and prone to denting.

One other down side is that burned on foods stick tenaciously to aluminum which is why non-stick coatings on fry pans and the like are so popular and such a good idea.

### **Composite**

Composite pots are usually stainless steel and copper or stainless steel and aluminum. The copper or aluminum is usually sandwiched between the stainless steel. Composite pots, especially those with copper-sandwiched bottoms are the best for cooking. Not only do you get the durable, non-stick qualities of stainless steel, copper is an excellent conductor. It heats quickly and cools quickly, and passing through the layer of stainless diffuses the heat for nice even cooking. Aluminum adds the same qualities, but is not quite as efficient as copper. Because stainless steel does not take to welding, specialized construction of composite pots adds weight. Poorly designed pots with sandwiched bottoms can break their welds, leaving you with useless cookware when the

copper plate and protective stainless layer falls off. Also, don't confuse a pot that has a layer of copper on the bottom that is visible with a sandwiched bottom. The thin layer of copper on the outside of some pots, typically electroplated on, are so thin it adds very little benefit to the cookware.

### **Stainless steel**

is another common cookware material.

It's extremely durable, cleans quickly and efficiently and won't scratch easily.

This material is heavier and more expensive than aluminum, but it doesn't oxidize and is more durable. It is easier to cook with because it doesn't trap heat as much as aluminum does, and it is slicker, making cleanup easier.

The down side is its inability to conduct heat evenly, leading to scorched food in the pattern of a stove's intense flame.

### **Titanium**

combines the lightness of aluminum with the toughness of stainless steel.

Expect to pay for this quality, though. Titanium heats quickly and stays hot, making it easy to burn your food.

### **Enamel**

Nothing more than thin steel coated with a kiln-baked enamel finish that looks good, is easy to clean and hard to scratch. The down side is that this stuff will chip and dent over time and rust will appear wherever a chip occurs.

### **Cast iron**

is the heaviest cookware material.

Dutch ovens are usually made from cast iron, as are many skillets and griddles. Cast iron is extremely sturdy and offers the benefit of adding small amounts of iron to your diet.

A lot of cookware is available with non-stick cooking surfaces. This makes cooking and cleanup much easier, and the newer surfaces are even resistant to scratching. Other pots have exterior surfaces coated with a black finish, which absorbs heat and hides soot.



Another option to consider is a pot grabber. These are handles that clamp to a pot rather than being permanently attached. This prevents burning your hand on a hot handle.

Don't forget the utensils. In addition to knife, fork and spoon, you may also want to get a spatula, tongs, cooking spoon, ladle, or other utensils, depending on what you're cooking.

The variety of cook set combinations and materials is extensive. When you buy, decide what you'll need for your type of camping and how much you're willing to pay.

### **Bi-metal combination**

which has been used in high-quality kitchen cookware for years and are now being sold for the backcountry. | Sigg has created a line of bimetal pots with black aluminum outers lined with stainless steel.

## **HANDLES**

### **Bail Handles**

Bail handles are almost identical to what you would find on a bucket. The semi circle arch rises from two points on the side of your pot, and folds down to the side when stored.

Some bail handles have a notch at the center, allowing for easier hanging over a fire. Bail handles can get hot, and if the handle is kept up while cooking, can become untouchable. Bail handles that swing easily can dump your meal into your cooking source or fire if they get swinging.

### **Swing Handles**

Swing handles are wires or a bar that swings out from the side of your pots and frying pans to form a handle. The most basic mess kits have a swing handle the goes over the top lid holding the whole set together. Because they are attached to the pot, and close to the heat source, they get very hot, even insulated ones can give you a nasty burn. If you are using a bug or windshield while cooking, the swing handles can get in the way. Sure you can swing them down to the sides but they will become unmanageably hot. Swing handles can also make nesting your pots, well, interesting if you are in a hurry or you are wearing gloves.

## **Pot Grabber**

A pot grabber is used for cookware that has no handles.

There are several benefits to using a pot grabber versus having a cooking set with handles. Because the pot grabber is not attached, you can use bug and windscreens easily. If you want to use your cookware in a camp oven, you don't have to worry about rubber coated swing handles melting from the heat. A pot grabber doesn't get hot; simply use it to move the pot on and off the heat source. Finally a well-designed pot grabber will hold a pot firm, even when full and gives you a nice stable grip for moving your meal around.

## **OPTIONS**

### **Non- stick Finish**

Non-stick coatings are finding their way into camping cookware. Allowing for easy cleanup and aiding in the making of perfect pancakes, a non-stick finish on the inside is very desirable when out in the field. Make sure there are no disclaimers on the cookware about using metal utensils while cooking that will scratch the surface. The latest generation of materials is tough as nails and can take some scraping in the field.

### **Nesting Pots**

This is a must have with a cookware sets. Pots that nest one into each other take up far less room in your pack for efficient space. If your cookware set comes with lids and or a pot grabber, they should also nest neatly together.

### **Storage Bag**

Cookware sets that have storage bags help keep all those little bits neatly together in your pack.

### **Pot Design**

Pots that are designed with rounded bottoms should be given special consideration. Bottoms that have been rounded cook more evenly, are easier to stir and easier to clean. Rounded bottom pots are a must have when looking at sets that can serve as an oven in the field. Pots should be thick and have lipped rims. Thicker material with lips on the rims is more durable and won't warp if it gets overheated. If you're using

a set with a pot grabber, a lipped rim is an absolute must. If the rim doesn't have anything for the grabber to bite into, the pot can slip off, dumping dinner on the ground.

## **WHAT SIZE DO I USE**

If the cookware set you are looking at is measured in liters, don't worry. A quart is just slightly smaller than a liter, so the measures for this guide are interchangeable.

### **Less Than 1 Quart**

Pots that are less than one quart can only serve limited use. A one quart pot can only hold about three cups, so a pot that is say 3/4 of a quart might be able to hold about two cups. Good enough for a personal cup of coffee or a small amount of soup, stews or beans.

#### **1 Quart**

Use a one-quart pot when traveling solo. Good for boiling water for coffee, heating up soup, oatmeal, most small cans of food, or making most freeze dried meals for one. A great size if you need not water fast. Don't use a one-quart pot for cooking rice or pasta. There won't be enough water to absorb the starch and the resulting sticky mess will be, well yuck!

#### **1.5 Quart**

Obviously can do everything a one-quart pot can do and more. This is a good size for cooking rice or pasta for a couple of people. This is also good for simmering a stew or more elaborate meal in the field.

#### **2 Quart**

Can do everything a one-quart and 1.5 quart pot can do and more. A good size if your are cooking for two to four people. This is a perfect size for boiling a larger amount of pasta or rice. This is also a very good size for heating up several freeze-dried meals at the same time.

#### **3 Quart**

This is a great size if you are with a larger group or car camping with the family. Capable of boiling large amounts of pasta slow cooking a big stew or soup. If your going into the backcountry, you will probably want to leave this one at home.

## More Than 3 Quart

Probably over kill, especially if you are in the backcountry. If you are going to steam clams, oysters or crabs while ocean camping or other bulky foods that require a lot of water to boil or steam this might be handy.

### COOKWARE CLEANING AND CARE

- Put soap on the outside of your pots. Only does this if you are car camping and cooking over a fire. Introducing this much soap in the backcountry would not be following Leave No Trace ethics. By putting dishwashing soap on the outside of your pot (make sure you don't get inside) makes for easy cleaning of the soot that will accumulate on the outside. Just take a small amount and put a thin layer on the bottom and sides of the pan. Make sure also you don't get any on the handles.

- Make a small cooking and cleaning kit to pack in with your cookware. Your cooking and cleaning kit should include a small pot holder, a can opener, cheesecloth packed in a Ziploc bag, a very small scrub pad, a small sample sized bottle of a unscented, bio-degradable, low-phosphate dish cleaner, and a small sponge. Use the potholder to pack around your stove or two pots that might be banging around making noise and driving you nuts. Make sure you get a quality can opener that is small and durable. To make a small scrub pad, take a standard pad that you can buy in the supermarket and cut off a 2" X 2" piece. Do the same for a sponge. You can take an old travel size shampoo bottle to store your dishwashing soap. Make sure to pack your scrub pad, sponge and soap in a Ziploc bag. Consider sealing your small bottle of soap with wax before going on a trip. These bottles tend to leak as the soap doesn't allow for a good seal, and can make quite a mess.

You can use the wax from a survival candle to reseal the bottle in the field. When in the backcountry, you can use the cheesecloth to strain any food bits out of your gray water.

Shake out the food bits into your waste bag and keep your cheesecloth stored separate from your scrubbing gear.

- Use sand or ashes to scrub your pot.

Ashes and sand have been used for centuries as a cleaning agent. Take a small amount of clean dry sand and scrub away with a cloth. Unless you have a really sticky mess, the results

may surprise you.

- Use heat and water to clean your pots.

If you have scooped out that stew and everyone is eating, fill the pot with water, put a lid on it and bring it to a boil. As soon as it is boiling turn the heat off and let the pan soak. Water is a powerful solvent and when combined with heat and steam can power off even the nastiest mess. Use the same pot of hot water to wash your plates and other dishes.

- Consider not using soap for cleaning.

If your traveling less than five days and you are in the backcountry, consider forging soap altogether. Hot water can keep the pots clean during this time.

- As soon as you get off the trail and back at home, properly clean your cookware set and allow it to thoroughly dry before storage. Nothing is worse than finding a crusty cooking kit after a long day of hiking.

## COOKWARE TIPS AND TRICKS

- Paint them black.

If your cookware does not have a black outer finish you can easily and cheaply put one on. Go to any hardware or home improvement store and pick up a can of black oven paint. Adding the black coating to the outside of your pots (don't get the paint on the inside) will help your cookware heat up faster.

- Use a large coffee can to boil water. Need to boil up some water but you don't want to cover that new cookware set in soot? A coffee can or other large steel can makes an excellent pot for yeoman's work.

- Use the lid from that coffee can. Need a small cutting board? Well the lid from the coffee can makes an excellent cutting board. When you are done with your trek you can put the can and lid into their respective recycling bins.

- If you are baking, frying or using a pot for a oven, consider raising your pot off of the heat source. Raising the pot from the heat source allows cooking at a lower temperature and helps prevent burning your food. A steel tuna can, with the inside edges filed to prevent cuts, cleaned and the labels removed make an excellent riser to protect your gingerbread

when cooking.

- Mark measurements on your pots. When you get your cookware at home take a high quality measuring cup and pour  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup, 1 cup, 2 cups and so on into the pot. Scratch a line on the inside of the pot at the  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup mark, the  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mark, the  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup mark, the 1 cup mark, the cup mark and so on. Now you won't need that measuring cup when you are out in the field. If your pot has a no-stick finish, take high heat paint which you can buy at any auto parts store and paint a small mark on the outside of the pot.
- Pack a  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup-measuring cup with your cookware. Find a good quality stainless steel measuring cup at a specialty kitchen store. If you can find a cup with a small spout and no handle this will work even better. The stainless steel will stand up to the rigors of the trail and is easy to clean. The small measuring cup will take up very little room, and can be used for precise measurements when your making your chicken and coconut curry.
- Purchase your cooking stove at the same time. When considering a cookware set either bring your stove with you or purchase one at the same time. The ideal stove should fit nicely in your 1.5 to 2 quart pot. If it will fit in a 1-quart pot, it may be too small to do larger duty of heating for a couple of people. If it won't fit in a 2-quart pot the stove you have selected is probably too big. When sizing your stove remember that this does not include the fuel bottle, which will have to be stored separately. Already have a stove? Then take it with you to size up your cookware. By putting your stove in your cookware you save room, protect the stove, and know where it is at all times.
- Make one-dish meals. Do you hate cleaning or cooking? Would you rather be watching the sunset than scrubbing pots? Consider making a one-dish meal and eating right from the pot. Saves time and saves cleaning.
- Take only what you need. If you are going on a solo weekend trip, consider taking just a single pot. It saves space and weight when you are out in the backcountry.

When buying cookware there are a number of options you need to consider. However equipped with this information you

are now more educated on the right cookware set to get for your needs. There really is no right or wrong answer. If the cookware meets your culinary needs, is within your budget, and doesn't take up your entire backpack when out in the backcountry then you have made a good choice.

## Last But Not Least . . .

### Aluminum foil

Aluminum foil is the outdoorsman's "kitchen in a pocket." Using foil allows the camp cook to dispense with carrying and cleaning heavy, bulky cookware.



## COMPANY ADDRESSES

Do you need an address or phone number for an outdoor gear company?

[Here is a listing of a contact information for some of the major gear companies.](#)



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## The Campfire



Campfires are one of the really enjoyable parts of the camping experience. The scent of wood smoke, the warm glow, hot dogs or marshmallows



roasting over the coals, the trance we all seem to fall into when we watch the fire in the evening.

*Campfires may not always be allowed, so be sure to check with the campground manager or the local forest service about any possible restrictions due to forest fire hazards.*

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### 16 Steps to Build a Campfire

1. Split dead limb into fragments and shave one fragment into slivers.
2. Bandage left thumb.
3. Chop other fragments into smaller fragments.
4. Bandage left foot.
5. Make structure of slivers (include those embedded in hand.)
6. Light Match
7. Light Match
8. Repeat "a Scout is cheerful" and light match.
9. Apply match to slivers, add wood fragments, and blow gently into base of fire.
10. Apply burn ointment to nose.
11. When fire is burning, collect more wood.
12. Upon discovering that fire has gone out while out searching for more wood, soak wood from can labeled "kerosene."
13. Treat face and arms for second-degree burns.
14. Re-label can to read "gasoline."
15. When fire is burning well, add all remaining firewood.
16. When thunder storm has passed, repeat steps 1 - 15





## Introduction to Fire

This intro goes through the various steps of building, lighting and using a fire.

Each section can be read by itself but for beginners it may be best to start at the very beginning, its a very good place to start.

- **Elements required for a fire to burn properly.**

When one of these three things are removed, the fire stops burning.

*Example -- Water cools fuel below ignition point, dirt cuts off the oxygen supply.*

- **Fuel**- material that will burn

*The most common fuel used is wood*

- **Heat** - enough heat to bring fuel to ignition

*Heat from the smaller fuel should ignite the next size up which should be arranged around it*

- **Air** - to provide oxygen to burning process

*All surfaces that are trying to burn need oxygen. Make sure that the fire is kept loosely packed to allow in as much air as possible.*

### Fuel

To make a fire we need wood of all sizes.

There are three different kinds of wood needed for a successful campfire

- **Tinder** - Tinder is material that catches on fire easily, such as dead twigs the size of a match, shavings of soft woods, peelings of cedar, birch bark or pine splinters, small twigs, dry leaves or grass, dry needles, bark or dryer lint.

This should start to burn immediately with a lighted match.



This is what you actually set fire to and it will have to generate enough heat to set your [kindling](#) on fire.

You will need a loose bundle that would over fill a large mug.

- **Kindling** - Kindling is the next size up, it needs to burn long enough and hot enough to set fire to the [fuel](#) around it. small sticks 1" around or less, twigs between the size of a pencil and a Twix bar or larger wood that has been split down.



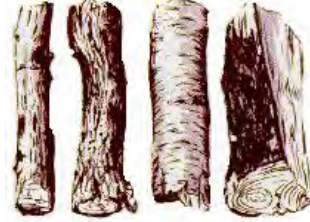
*The guitar of the noisy teenager at the next campsite makes excellent kindling.*



● **Fuel**- Fuel is larger wood that keeps the fire going. Generally hard woods such as hickory, oak, maple and ash. These woods make steady, hot fires and burn into good hot coals. Fuel ranges in size from good size branches to logs.

The thicker the wood the longer it will take to catch fire but once burning will last longer.

How much you collect will depend on the type of fire you are building, these are covered in the following sections.



*Always have plenty of wood before starting your fire.*

*Pile wood where wind will not blow sparks toward it.*

The gathering of fuel in natural areas is often restricted. Cutting of living trees is almost always forbidden - but neither is it very useful, because sap-filled wood does not burn well. Squaw wood (*dead parts of standing trees*) may also be prohibited. Wood lying on the ground is usually permitted.

## Campfire Safety

The center piece of any campsite is your campfire.

Whether you plan to cook your meals by campfire, with a propane camp stove or by other means the campfire is traditionally the center of camp. Your campfire is also the most dangerous activity on your camping trip if not planned and handled properly, especially if you are not camping in a developed campground.

If you are camping in a developed campground most Forests and Parks do not require a campfire permit. If you are camping in a dispersed area, Wilderness area or undeveloped Forest or Park lands check and make sure you have the proper permits. Also check and make sure there are no fire restrictions issued. Many times during the year high fire danger conditions exists and all campfire permits are canceled. This is especially of concern if your camping trip is in a dispersed area, Wilderness, or undeveloped Forest or Park lands. The best approach is to make a point to stop by the nearest forest ranger district office, visitor center, ranger or fire stations to check on current fire conditions just before you plan to depart on your camping trip.

If you are camping in a developed campground the chances are there will be some type of campfire pit or developed area for your campfire. This is the best place to build your campfire. Building a campfire more conveniently located will only scar the campsite for future users.

## The dangers



A campfire may burn out of control in two basic ways:  
on the ground or in the trees.

Dead leaves or pine needles on the ground may ignite from direct contact with burning wood. Alternatively, airborne embers (or their smaller kin, sparks) may ignite dead material in overhanging branches. This latter threat is less likely, but a fire in a branch will be virtually impossible to put out without firefighting equipment, and may spread more quickly than a ground fire.

Embers may simply fall off of logs and be carried away by the air, or they may be ejected at high speed by exploding pockets of sap. With these dangers in mind, some locales prohibit all open fires, particularly during times of the year particularly prone to wildfires.

Campfires are prohibited in many public camping areas. Public areas with large tracts of woodland usually have signs indicating the fire danger, which usually depends on recent rain and the amount of dead growth; when the danger is highest, all open fires are prohibited. Even in safer times, it is common to require registration and permits to burn a campfire. Such areas are often viewed by rangers, who will dispatch someone to investigate any unidentified plume of smoke.

## Acquiring Firewood

It's probably a good idea to bring your own wood!

Small town general stores & National Park services are out to make their money off of seasonal campers buying wood & forgotten personal items.

These places tend to be extremely overpriced.

This is where your so called "cheap camping trip" ends up costing a lot more than you expected.

Plan ahead.

Buy lots of wood for a better price & have some left over for the next trip.

Finding wood in the wilderness can be a rough job.

**National Parks** will not allow you to cut or even gather down wood.  
You must bring your own.

**National Forests** allow cutting of wood with a permit in posted areas.  
Campers can usually collect down wood unless otherwise posted.

**State Parks** - check with the rangers on fire regulations.

**BLM** - fires are allowed just about anywhere safe in a rock ring, always use good judgment. Check with local officials for exact regulations.

## Good Campfire Wood

*Hard Wood*  
burns longer

Oak  
Eucalyptus  
Citrus  
Cedar  
Almond  
Mesquite  
Ash  
Beech  
Hawthorn  
Holly

*Soft Wood*  
burns fast & splits easier

Avocado  
Pine  
Pinyon  
Birch  
Fir  
Hazel  
Larch

When you need to cook or simply want to relax around a campfire, knowing what kind of wood to use can eliminate frustration.

### The Burning Properties of Wood

Wood from an evergreen tree, called "softwood," burns quickly, lets off lots of heat and dies leaving no coals. It makes a colorful bonfire, but you will need lots of it for a whole evening.

Deciduous or "hardwood" takes longer to ignite, burns slowly and turns to glowing coals. It is perfect for a cooking fire.

Remember that good firewood is always dry. Rotten, crumbly, wet or green wood will make a smoky fire. Poplar can smoke even when it is dry. Avoid softwood with balls of tree gum attached, as this will cause a fire to spit.

For a great firestarter, use "fatwood" or dry wood from an evergreen tree that is streaked with resins. Pine needles and Birch Bark (never peel from a live tree) also work well. Don't try to start a fire with other kinds of bark though, since bark does not burn well.

**Note:** Never collect wood near Poison Ivy or Poison Oak. The smoke from burning any part of the plants can cause an allergic rash

Below is a list of the most common woods for burning, there are more. It is worth remembering that ALL wood will burn better if split.

There is an old saying, "before starting a fire - collect the right wood." It is worth learning which wood is best for your fires as it will make life a lot easier. A natural result of tree recognition is to learn the burning properties of their woods

[Alder](#): Poor in heat and does not last, to be seen growing beside ponds

[Apple](#): Splendid - It burns slowly and steadily when dry, with little flame, but good heat. The scent is pleasing.

[Ash](#): Best burning wood; has both flame and heat, and will burn when green, though naturally not as well as when dry.

[Beech](#): A rival to ash, though not a close one, and only fair when green. If it has a fault, it is apt to shoot embers a long way.

[Birch](#): The heat is good but it burns quickly. The smell is pleasant.

**Cedar**: Good when dry. Full of crackle and snap. It gives little flame but much heat, and the scent is beautiful.

[Cherry](#): Burns slowly, with good heat. Another wood with the advantage of scent Chestnut. Mediocre. Apt to shoot embers. Small flame and heating power. Douglas Fir. Poor. Little flame and heat.

[Chestnut](#): Mediocre. Apt to shoot embers. Small flame and heating power.

**Douglas Fir**: Poor. Little flame or heat.

[Elder](#): Mediocre. Very smoky. Quick burner, with not much heat.

[Elm](#): Commonly offered for sale. To bum well it needs to be kept for two years. Even then it will smoke. Vary variable fuel.

[Hazel](#): Good.

[Holly](#): Good, will burn when green, but best when kept a season.

[Hornbeam](#): Almost as good as beech.

**Laburnum**: Totally poisonous tree, acrid smoke, taints food and best never used.

[Larch](#): Crackly, scented, and fairly good for heat.

[Laurel](#): Has brilliant flame.

**Lime**: Poor. Burns with dull flame.

[Maple](#): Good.

[Oak](#): The novelist's 'blazing fire of oaken logs' is fanciful, Oak is sparse in flame and the smoke is acrid, but dry old oak is excellent for heat, burning slowly and steadily until whole log collapses into cigar-like ash.

[Pear](#): A good heat and a good scent.

[Pine](#): Burns with a splendid flame, but apt to spit. The resinous Weymouth pine has a lovely scent and a cheerful blue flame.

[Plane](#): Burns pleasantly, but is apt to throw sparks if very dry. Plum. Good heat and scent.

[Plum](#): Good heat and aromatic.

**Poplar**: Truly awful.

**Rhododendron**: The thick old stems, being very tough, burn well.

**Robinia** (Acacia): Burns slowly, with good heat, but with acrid smoke.

[Spruce](#): Burns too quickly and with too many sparks.

[Sycamore](#): Burns with a good flame, with moderate heat. Useless green.

**Thorn**: Quite one of the best woods. Burns slowly, with great heat and little smoke. Walnut. Good, so is the scent.

[Walnut](#): Good, and so is the scent. Aromatic wood.

[Willow](#): Poor. It must be dry to use, and then it burns slowly, with little flame. Apt to spark.

[Yew](#): Last but among the best. Burns slowly, with fierce heat, and the scent is pleasant.

### **Where to find FREE wood:**

Behind your local Home Depot, old lumber . . .  
ask when garbage day is & get there the night before

At Construction sights, scrap piles,  
but don't be jumping any locked gates or fences

Inside Industrial Parks, palettes & such can be found in abundance behind  
these commercial concrete alleys

Local Parks & Recr -  
near maintenance buildings, whenever they just trimmed the trees

Vacant lots being cleared, real estate land that is recently under  
development, trees being thinned out

### **Amount :**

super market bundles -

Approx. one cubic foot.

Small wrapped campers packs. 6-10 pieces.

Sold in grocery & general stores.

Overall price per piece is expensive.

If you have space for storage in the backyard, shed or garage, consider buying larger quantities, such as:

- cord - size 4' x 4' x 8', will fill up 2 standard pick up truck beds. (level w/ sides)
- half cord - size 4' x 4' x 4', will fill the back of a standard pick up truck bed (level w/ sides)
  - 1/3 cord - size 16 cubic feet - will fill the back of a mini pickup truck bed. . . perfect for 2-3 camp trips!  
- \$25 -\$35 (usually it is a mix of hard / soft woods)
  - 1/8 cord - equal to 12-16 supermarket bundles

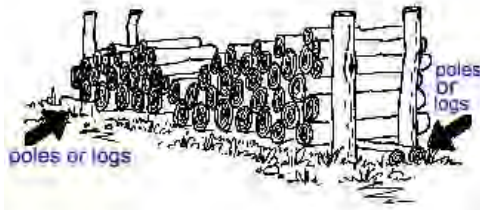
## Storing Your Firewood

### Wood Piles

A wood pile is exactly that - a pile of wood!

It is used to keep your fire going for the length of time you need it, by having a supply ready on hand to add to the fire when needed rather than having to go and get, then chop more wood while the fire slowly goes out.

Place two poles parallel on ground and stack firewood on poles to protect it from dampness



Stack wood at least 10 feet from fire  
*Cover with a tarp or plastic poncho*

Remember to care for the environment -  
do not drag a log out of a hedge if it means destroying the hedge.

Before you begin, choose the site of your wood pile.

This should be between the fire place and chopping area so that the wood is within reach but not close enough that it will set on fire or you will fall over it, and close enough to the chopping area so that you are not carrying the wood to far but not too close that you are in danger from flying bits while someone is chopping.

To keep everything neat, you need to mark out your woodpile so different sizes of wood can be collected together neatly, so when you need to add wood you don't have to search through a great big heap to find what you want.

***Different sizes of wood should be grouped together.***

The first should be kindling, the small thin bits to start the fire with. This will be mainly small twigs, which can be found at the bottom of hedges and in undergrowth. This should always be dead wood - it should snap easily with a sharp 'crack' when broken.

You can also collect the 'bits' from the chopping area that an axe will produce.

The next section is the slightly thicker (around 5-15mm diameter) wood to place on top of kindling to get the fire going. These can probably be jumped on and snapped, or even broken by hand rather than sawn or chopped (much easier) - these should be kept quite short so they can lay on the kindling without being 'up in the air' when placed together.

The next two sections are your logs, the real burning bits. How thick these will be is for you to decide as to the type of fire you want, fast and flames (thin, 15-30mm diameter) or slow and hot (thick, 30+mm dia). Chop the wood into lengths about the length of your fire pit/altar fire.

You may have more or less sections if you wish, but these are probably all you will need for most fires.



The pile should be kept dry at all times, as wet wood is very difficult to burn. The best way is either to pitch a shelter, a tarp or old tent over the pile, or at the very least drape an old groundsheet kept over the top of the pile when it is not being added to or used. This will, of course, not help if your campsite floods - but it will keep off most things except torrential downpours.

A supply of kindling and newspaper should be kept somewhere dry (such as in the trunk of your vehicle) so if everything gets completely soaked there is still a chance of getting a fire going. You will find you need much more kindling with wet wood as it has to dry before it burns.

Softwoods, like pine, fir and cedar, are best for starting a fire.

Dry hardwood, like birch, maple and oak, is best for making a bed of hot coals.

## Preparation before building your fire

- Clear area of all debris  
avoid areas with overhanging branches.
- Always use an established fire ring if available!

Try to use an area that has already been used for a campfire. You will be able to tell where someone has built their fire previously due to the ashen and scorched area of the fire.

## Making a Fire Ring

Ideally, every fire should be lit in a fire ring. If a fire ring is not available, a temporary fire site may be constructed.

One way is to clear a circle 10 feet across down to bare dirt. Hollow out a fire hole two feet across, and five or six inches deep. Pile the soil around the edge of the fire hole.

Construct a fire ring surrounded by rocks.  
This will help contain the campfire's ashes.

Another is to cover the ground with sand, or other soil mostly free of flammable organic material, to a depth of a few centimeters. The area of sand should be large enough to safely contain the fire and any pieces of burning wood that may fall out of it. Sand piles should be scattered after the fire has been put out. If the topsoil is moist, it may suffice to simply

clear it of any dead plant matter.

Fire rings, however, do not fully protect material on the ground from catching fire. Flying embers are still a threat, and the fire ring may become hot enough to ignite material in contact with it.

No fire should be lit close to trees, tents or other fire hazards. This includes overhanging branches; some carry dead, dry material that can ignite from a single airborne ember. In addition, a fire may harm any roots under it, even if they are protected by a thin layer of soil. Conifers run a greater risk of root damage, because they lack taproots and their roots run close to the surface. Fires also should not be lit on bare rocks, because the ash will leave a black stain.

An additional safety measure is to have sand, a bucket of water, shovel and a fire extinguisher on hand to smother and douse the fire if it does get out of the fire pit.

It is wise to gather these materials before they are actually needed.

Gather wood and [stack in separate piles](#) away from fire area.  
Do not use green or freshly cut wood.

Many parks and forest forbid gathering fallen branches.  
It plays an important role in the [ecosystem](#) of the wilderness.

### **Keep your fire small.**

These days a large fire in any wilderness area is frowned upon. Large fires take more fuel to generate which means you will be using more wood. Large fires can also easily become out of control. Keep it small and to a minimum.

By doing this not only can you save disaster from happening but other campers in the area will not become annoyed by the large fire.

## **Building your fire**

There are several different types of fire, some are good for keeping you warm, others are better for cooking, however they all follow the same design principals listed below.

Start with:

- 10-12 sheets of newspaper  
or  
other means of a [fire starter](#).

*I haven't tried this one yet, but someone suggested I use a Duraflame Log.*



Learn to start a fire simply with paper, matches and kindling.



**I advise against using charcoal lighter fluid, gasoline or kerosene.**

- [Tinder](#)

Place your tinder in a small pile in the middle of the fireplace.

Crumple the sheets of newspaper loosely and individually.

Mound them in the fireplace, ring or pit.

Distribute the kindling above the paper.

***Fuzz Stick***

*Sometimes there are not enough small twigs and sticks around to start a fire with. You can always make a 'fuzz stick' which, because of their curls of wood, catch fire more easily than a solid stick.*

*Something for whittling away those spare moments of 'nothing to do'.*

- [Kindling](#)

Build the kindling around your tinder, making sure that you do not pack it too tight, as the fire will need oxygen to burn well.

Stack loose enough to allow air flow but close so it catches fire

- Light - Ignite the fire at the bottom of tinder pile

you may need to blow or fan the flame gently to encourage it to light.



Make sure that you have plenty of kindling available, so that you can add more as the fire becomes established.

Once the kindling starts to burn, gradually add more until it is burning nicely.

- [Fuel](#)

Gradually add the fuel into the shape that you want. Don't rush this stage and make sure that the wood you are adding is less than twice the size of that which is already burning.

Larger sticks & logs should be added as the fire is going well

Set the firewood on top of it all.

Never throw wood onto a fire, always place it carefully

Remember do not try to compact your base materials because you must leave them loose to allow for proper air passage. Any fire requires oxygen and by leaving materials loose this allows for oxygen to pass through the materials and ensure a good fire.

Once it's going good add more firewood, 2-3 pieces at a time going up in size and towards hardwood such as oak, ash and maple if you have it. They will burn longer.

Aspen, birch and poplar are quite common and they make good fires as they burn hot but fairly fast.

Before you know it you will have a campfire.

Once a coal bed has been built add the logs in a crisscross pattern and they will catch and burn nicely.

This is all fine and good if you have primo wood to work with.

Unfortunately if you're are relying on buying your wood at the campground store you may very well end up with fairly green (wet, fresh cut) softwood. The softwood part is OK, you'll just go through more. But what do you do about the green part?

Start by taking your [camp axe](#) and shaving a piece or two to get a mound of chips or shavings. Then split a piece or two into small sticks. You can substitute local twigs and sticks if they are around. Kid's love rounding up that stuff. Finally split a few pieces into a 1 inch size range.

I've also found that there are often folks selling firewood near campgrounds. Sometimes they have great dry wood all split and ready for a reasonable price, keep your eyes open when you're near your destination.

Just fill the back seat floor and let the kid's put their feet up on the stuff.

Now build your fire.

Newspaper, Shavings, sticks, split pieces.

The trick here is that almost anything will burn if it's cut small enough.

Light it off and away you go. If it stalls fan it with a sheet of newspaper a little extra oxygen can also do wonders for a slow starting fire.

Building the fire in a [teepee shape](#) is also helpful since fire loves to follow the grain and move upward.

Now just add wood, working your way up in size.

Before long you will be able to burn anything you have.

### **The use of fluids to start a fire:**

The use of gasoline or kerosene can be like poking a Bull Moose in the nose with a sharp stick. It is just not smart and could be deadly.

Gasoline should **NEVER** be used under any circumstances.

Kerosene on the other hand has been used to start fires without any problems.

But, extreme care must be used.

Do not use this method if there are flames or hot coals. You may get the same effect as if you tossed a lit match into a keg of gunpowder.

I have used charcoal fluid to start fire in desperation and even that can flare up if hot coals or flames exist.

**Make it a habit never to use fluids to start your fires.**

**Be safe and learn how to build fires using paper and wood.**

If you want to cheat, buy a box of fire starters.

## Types of Fires

**There are many different types of fires to construct. Some are more suited for cooking, some for burning overnight, some for warmth.**

### Fire's for Cooking

When building a cooking fire you need to make sure that the heat is directed towards what you are cooking and not lost to the outside world.

The normal way of doing this is to build a [basic fire](#) and surround it with something that will reflect the heat back in and support a grid above the fire on which you can put your pots.

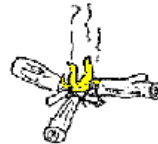
You can try any of the following as fire surrounds:

- Bricks are good because they will keep the grid you cook on, level
- You can use two thick logs but soak them first to make sure they don't burn down too fast
- Rocks, but **never** use ones that have been in water as they could explode when hot

### Star Fire

This is basically one of the simplest fires to make.

A star fire is formed by making a small fire and arranging logs around the outside facing inwards to form the points of a star.

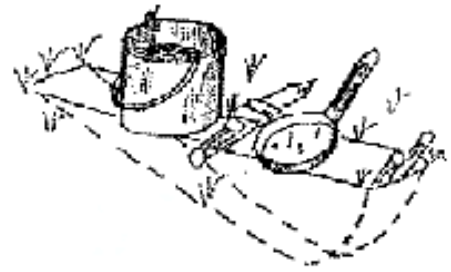
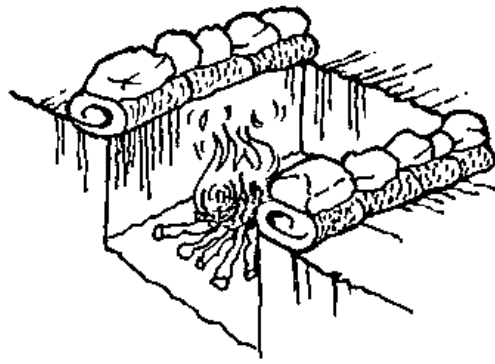


The logs are fed in lengthwise and be drawn apart to leave glowing embers and ash **(for cooking)** in the centre. To start the fire going strong again simply push the logs together again.

This type of fire is very useful for conserving fuel. It produces little flame or smoke when required and can be easily 'stoked' by sitting back and pushing one of the logs inwards occasionally.

### Trench Fire

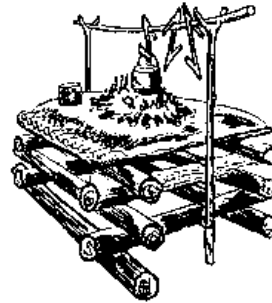
The heat will be reflected up by the sides which will also provide a really solid support for your grid and pans. This type of fire is especially good in exposed or windy site. Try and keep one end open towards the direction of the wind to make sure that the fire gets enough air.



## Altar Fire

One of the most popular cooking fires is called an Altar fire, which is made of a raised platform on which the fire is lit. These can be made from wood, but quite often metal is used, and half an old metal drum used to hold the fire. This is very similar to a domestic barbecue.

This type of fire is ideal for long stay camps as it helps eliminate the-need for turf removal and low-level cooking. Watch the height you build to. It is much safer to have it too low than too high.



- **Teepee Fire** - good for quick cooking since the heat is concentrated in one spot.

There are many tricks and myths on the proper way to build a fire, however, the best way is still how Native Americans have been doing it for centuries. The Teepee fire is the most efficient camp fire possible, it lights easily and burns well. The reason for this is the large amount of air entering the heart of the fire which allows the fire to burn easily and without fuss. Although some other fires are better suited for cooking or heating, the Teepee fire is the easiest to start, even in wet conditions. Always start with the "Teepee", then make it into any fire you like, such as the "Log cabin" fire better suited for cooking.

Lay the fuel over your kindling like a teepee.



First of all, stick a thin branch (1cm diameter) into the ground as above  
Put waded-up newspaper tightly around the base, or any of the things mentioned above, but most importantly of all it should be dry.

Don't use firelighters, that's cheating!

**NEVER** be tempted to use meths, petrol or otherwise to get a fire going.  
Then, build up your fire using progressively thicker twigs as you build outwards, making sure you have a gap you can put the match in.

Before you light the fire, make sure you have a good supply of small logs and thicker wood to hand, as the thin wood burns very quickly.

Continue to add more and more larger pieces as the fire burns.

**DO NOT SUFFOCATE THE FIRE.**

Always make sure that plenty of air gets into the heart of the fire.

At this stage, one oversized log can snuff out the fire.

Sort the wood into piles of similarly sized bits so you can get the right wood to build the fire up just when you need it, rather than sorting through a big heap.

Follow the link to the topic on [woodpiles and chopping areas](#) for further information on this subject.

## Keyhole Fire

The secret to successful cooking is to build a good fire that will provide hot embers, for it is on embers that we cook - not flames.

One of the problems with embers is that they tend to become cool after a short while. The keyhole fire solves this problem. Build the fire in a large circle area and pull the hot ashes through into the smaller circle where the cooking takes place, as they are needed. A two inch bed of ashes is required for successful backwoods cooking, use beech or oak logs, as these will give longer lasting embers. Charcoal can also be used and it will hold the heat longer than wood embers.

### 1. Prepare the Site

- Select a fire site at least 8' from bushes or any combustibles. Be sure no tree branches overhang the site.
- Make a U-shaped perimeter using large rocks or green logs. If using logs, they'll need to be wet down from time to time. If breezy, have back of firepit face the wind.
- Put a large flat rock at the rear of the firepit to act as a chimney. The "chimney rock" will direct the smoke up and away from the fire area.



### 2. Lay the Kindling

- Fill the fire area with crumpled paper or tinder.
- Lay kindling over paper in layers, alternating direction with each layer. Use thin splits of wood or small dead branches. Do not put kindling down "teepee style". The whole fire area should be covered with the kindling stack.
- Set a bucket of water near the fire area. Light the paper to start your fire.



### 3. Build the Fire, Grade the Coals

- When kindling is in full blaze, add firewood. The wood should be all the same size, as much as possible. Use hardwood or hardwood branches if available. Distribute wood evenly over fire area, not just in the center.
- As soon as the last flames die down leaving mostly white coals, use a flat stick to push the coals into a high level at the back end and low level at the front. This will give you the equivalent of 'Hi', 'Med' and 'Lo' cook settings.



4. To cook, set the grill on rocks or green logs. Put food directly on grill or in cookware and prepare your meal. If cooking directly on the grill, a small spray bottle or squirt gun is handy for shooting down any rogue flames, usually caused by food drippings.

As the fire diminishes, [bank](#) the coals to get the most heat from them.

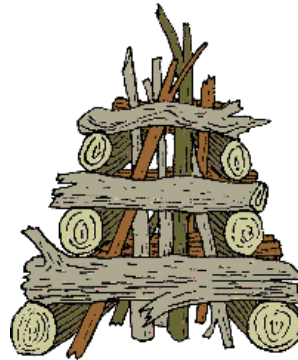
After cooking, throw on a log or two for your evening campfire. Before retiring, extinguish thoroughly and soak with water. Turn rocks in on fire bed. It will be easy to reassemble the next day if required.



## Pyramid Fire

You will need 10 or 12 large logs  
(4+ inches diameter, about a yard long - the exact size doesn't matter) for  
the framework of the fire, plus lots of thinner wood to stack and stuff it.

Stack the larger logs into a pyramid, alternating the logs two by two and  
starting with the biggest at the bottom and sloping the sides inwards  
(see diagram below)



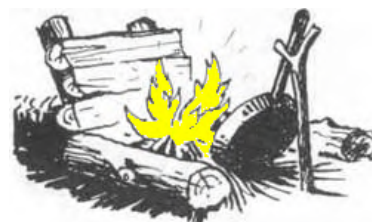
When your framework is as high as you want it, give it a lil shove to make  
sure it is stable -  
you want the wood to collapse INWARDS as it burns but just in case,  
it is a good idea to construct a safety ring of rocks or logs outside the fire  
and a little way away, to trap any errant logs which try to escape.

When you are satisfied, begin to insert long thinner branches downwards  
into the heart of the pyramid -  
at this point it is a good idea to smuggle in a box of firelighters or stuff  
the center with home-made fire starters and dry kindling, to prevent  
embarrassment at the crucial moment. Continue filling the pyramid with  
smaller branches and twigs, then finish it off by lightly stuffing any cracks  
around the bottom of the fire with DRY newspaper or any available dry  
paper, cardboard etc.

Providing you have constructed the fire with plenty of dry wood and spaces  
for air to enter, it should blaze away merrily for quite some time. Keep it  
going by adding logs from time to time, although if you intend cooking in the  
embers the original fire should be sufficient and will provide charcoal  
embers that will continue to glow well into the night.

### **Reflector Fire or Lean To Fire**

A good simple fire.



Drive two stout sticks into the ground so that they are leaning backwards  
slightly. Lay some logs on top of one another against the sloping back. Form

a rectangle on the floor at the base of the slope as your fireplace. By lighting a fire in the middle most of the heat will be reflected back to the front of the fire, making cooking easy. Be sure that you build it so the 'grate' or fireplace faces the wind.

### **Construction of A Reflector Fire**

A good, solid reflector can be made by driving four uprights into the ground a few inches apart. Then you simply pile sticks in between the uprights to build up a "wall".

I deally you will want to fill the space in between with earth.

These walls can be used for a variety of things, here as reflectors but also as dams and shelter walls.

### **Uses of A Reflector Fire**

In this section I am only interested in using these walls as reflectors.

A good reflector close to the fire will help reflect the heat back towards you.



Not only this, but it helps to draw the smoke upwards instead of getting in your eyes.

You can use this to your advantage by also reflecting heat into your shelter.

### **LOG CABIN FIRE**

No we don't mean an actual cabin that you live in, it relates to the position of the firewood. Once you have a good [teepee fire](#) going, you can begin placing logs in a log cabin formation. Two to three logs per layer, with each layer being perpendicular to the next.

The slow efficient burn makes this a great cooking fire, it generates a good amount of heat and coals without much flame. Using smaller sized wood, you can create a low fire with uniform heat over a large area, great for grilling large amounts steaks. The log cabin fire allows air to enter over the entire area which the wood occupies. The smaller the pieces the more control you have over a larger area.

In the backcountry you can use oversized logs letting the fire burn them in half for you and still plant your frying pan right over the heat. Actually you don't really need a grill for your pots and pans, when built correctly it's like cooking on your stove at home. Use two thick logs to create a level platform for your pot, slide some smaller pieces of wood into the crevasse created between the logs. Keep adding small wood under the pot, which water will be boiling in no time. When the logs begin to burn down, add another two logs perpendicular to the ones underneath. This is very similar to a long fire but can be done in a standard park fire pit.

### **Crisscross Fire**

Good for a long lasting fire with a lot of coals.  
Excellent for a campfire.

Lay the fuel over the kindling in a crisscross pattern.

Excellent for use after a rain . . .

**Anyone can start a fire on a bone-dry day, or when they're armed with dry newspaper, kerosene or charcoal lighter.  
But let the day deteriorate to persistent rain,  
and where there's smoke there won't be fire!**

**Learn how to make and keep a fire in the rain, [Click Here!](#)**

Make sure someone is responsible for the fire at all times, and a bucket of water  
(and fire extinguisher if possible)  
close by in case of any emergency.  
Make sure that you are all aware of the [fire procedures](#), should any accident occur, such as grass,  
trees and tents catching fire.

## Make & Maintain A Fire in The Rain

### Here's how to make and maintain fire when foul weather comes to stay:

You'll need a sharp knife, hand axe, and a saw (folding saws are highly recommended). Contrary to the ravings of some "authorities," it is nearly impossible to make fire in prolonged rain without all these tools.

#### Procedure

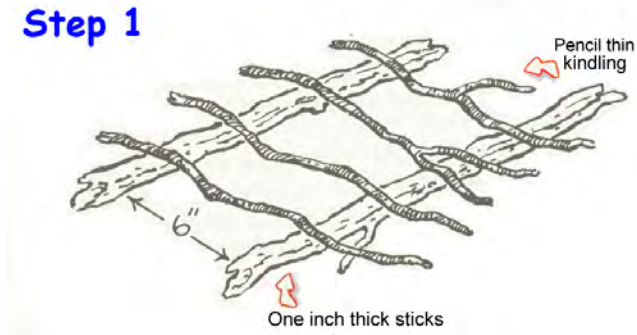
1. In an evergreen forest: Collect several handfuls of the dead lower branches of evergreen trees (commonly termed "squaw wood"). Wood should grade in size from pencil-lead thickness to no bigger than your little finger, and it should break with a crisp, audible snap. If you don't hear the positive "snap," the wood is too wet, in which case proceed directly to step 3.  
If "squaw-wood" is suitably dry, it will burst into a bright flame the moment a match is applied. Use a small candle to provide sustained heat to your tinder ball if the bark of the squaw-wood is wet. From this point on, it's simply a matter of adding more wood and protecting the developing blaze from rain.  
(see To maintain fire in driving rain).
2. Look for resin blisters on the outside bark of balsam fir trees. Break a few blisters with a sharp stick and collect the highly bile resin. Use the resin as a "chemical fire-starter" to propel your tinder to flame.
3. Locate a dead, downed tree and saw off a portion which does not touch the ground. Grounded wood rots quickly, so is apt to be unsound. Especially search for deadfalls which overhang into Un-lit clearing or waterway. These are almost certain to be rot free, as sunlight kills microorganisms which cause decay. If you cannot find a dead downed tree to saw up, look for any floating log. If the log "floats," the center is dry. Splittings taken from the heart will burn.
4. When you have completed your first saw cut through the Wall, check the center of the cut log with your hand. Is it bone dry? It should be. Even a month long rain will seldom soak through a six inch log!
5. Saw the deadfall into 12 inch sections then split each with your handaxe by the method [illustrated in the AXE page](#).  
It should require only a few minutes to reduce each log chunk to half inch diameter kindling by this procedure
6. Cut wafer-thin tinder from a few splittings with your pocket knife. The key to producing long thin shavings rather than little squiggly ones is to use a sawing, rather than whittling action with your knife. Even a small dull knife will produce nice shavings if you persistently saw the blade back and forth.

Build a well-ventilated platform fire of logs, thick sticks or flat stones.



### Step 1

Establish a fire base of one inch diameter sticks as illustrated. Place pencil-thin "support" sticks at right angles to the fire base.

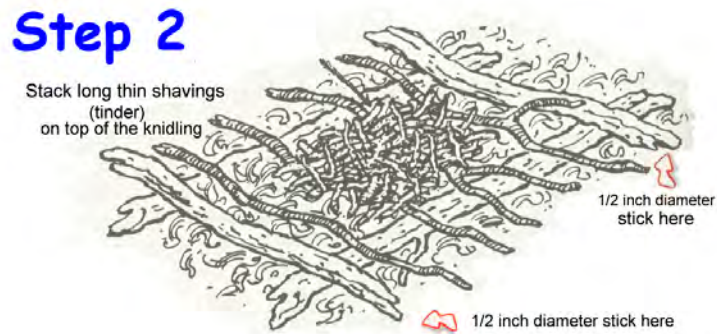


### Step 2

Meticulously stack wafer-thin shavings on top of the kindling to a height of about one inch. Place the shavings so that plenty of air can get between them.

"Smoke" is nature's way of saying you're smothering the flame!

Next, put two half inch diameter "support" sticks at right angles to the fire base. These will support the heavier kindling you'll add over the tinder in step 3.



### Step Three

Now, pile on fine split kindling above the tinder box to lock the tinder in place. Again, leave space between the splittings so your fire can "breathe."

Your fire is now ready to light. Apply flame directly below the tinder (shavings). A small candle will furnish the sustained heat necessary to ignite damp wood.

Hand feed shavings (not kindling) one at a time into the developing flame.

Don't heap kindling on until you have a bright reliable blaze.

## Step 3

Add fine split kindling  
above the tinder box  
to lock the tinder in place



Other Platform Styles:



Rock Style Platform

**Hints:** Carry strike anywhere matches in addition to a butane lighter and candle. Keep matches in a plastic jar with a cotton wad on top. A spent 16 gauge shotshell nested inside a 12 gauge case makes a tough watertight match safe.

Some campers' waterproof matches by painting on nail polish, but this causes match heads to deteriorate. A waterproof match case is a better idea.

An effective method of drying matches is to draw them briskly though your hair. Don't use your clothes; they are too abrasive.

"Fire-Ribbon" - a semi-liquid fire-starting paste is available at most camp stores. Just squeeze it on like toothpaste. A summer's supply will fit in a 35 mm film can.

You can make your own fire-starters by soaking miniature logs" of rolled newspaper in paraffin.

Cotton balls dipped in Vaseline make wonderful fire-starters!

### **Banking the fire to preserve fuel:**

Use this procedure when you have a good hot fire but little wood to maintain it.

"Bank" your fire by setting small logs, parallel to one another, across the top. Rule-of-thumb for a smoke-free flame is to allow a "radius width" between parallel pieces of wood. Thus, a pair of two inch thick logs should be separated by a full inch to ensure equate ventilation. "Banking" will reduce this distance to a mere (though identifiable) slit, which will naturally diminish use of oxygen and slow combustion. You should also shut off any breeze coming into the fire. A large flat rock or a tier of logs will work fine.

### **Extinguishing the fire:**

Throwing water on a fire is not good enough. You must ascertain it is out by checking the fire bed with your hands. If water is in short supply, use the "stir/sprinkle/stir" method outlined below.

1. Sprinkle a handful of water on the flames with your hands.  
Continue to sprinkle until the fire has gone out.
2. Stir the fire with a stick and sprinkle some more.  
Repeat as needed until the fire is **DEAD OUT!**

Even if you had a fire the night before & the fire seems out.  
The coals are still cooking way underneath.

Pour water on it & hear the sizzling.

Put your fire dead out at least 1/2 hour before you start to break camp.  
Let the coals die down, then pour water over the ashes, and spread soil over them.

Mix soil, water, and ashes until all embers are completely out.

Fire used haphazardly can not only cause damage but can cause death. It creates death to animals, people, and an environment that took billions of years to create and none of these things can ever be replaced.

**Remember,**



**"Only you can prevent forests fires!"**

Before you turn in for bedtime, make sure there are no flames,  
windy conditions

&

remember to fold up your camp chairs & lay them down.

Winds have been known to blow them into the fire & ignite.



## Emergency Fire Procedures

Thankfully, serious fires on camp outtings are relatively rare. However, fire is a potentially dangerous thing, intentional or otherwise, and this section is designed to give suggestions on how to prevent such accidents from happening.

### Cooking

Open wood fires are actively encouraged wherever possible, and as long as people do not mess about there is no real danger. However, there are a few things that should be borne in mind when using an open fire:

#### LIGHTING

If the fire does not seem to be catching, **NEVER** be tempted to throw some flammable liquid on to try and get it to light. It will break up into little drops, and the smaller drops will ignite easily. This can easily turn into a fireball with serious consequences.

#### PLAYING WITH FIRE

While waiting for the fire to burn up efficiently, kids often want to poke the fire with sticks, then when the end catches wave it around like a sparkler. Apart from the fact that poking doesn't help it start, there is a danger of burning people by hitting them with a stick, and also burning clothes.

#### GRASS

Although there should be no risk if you have dug your fire pit big enough, grass around the edge of the fire pit can catch fire, and if the ground is dry it can quickly spread.

You should always have a bucket of water, and a beater if possible, next to each fire.

This is one of the reasons why a fire should never be left unattended.

#### AFTERWARDS

When you have finished with a fire, such as last thing at night, make sure that the fire is fully out before going to bed. Give it a good poke and rake the ashes, but if need be throw some water on it.

### Tents

In theory, tents should never catch fire. However, accidents or stupidity can cause this.

There are several points to be aware of:

#### SITE PLANNING

Make sure that all fire pits are well away from all tents. This may sound obvious but it is surprising how often it is forgotten!

### SMOKING

A cigarette is sufficient to ignite a tent - especially if you have just sprayed deodorant or hairspray and some insect repellants inside a tent!

### COOKING

Regardless of the weather, you should never be tempted to cook on a small gas cooker inside a tent. If the door flap blows into the flame, the tent could catch fire, and you could get trapped inside.

Rather, set up a 'fire shelter' type tent outside, and put the cooker on a table underneath it. Proprietary fire shelters can be bought, but in their absence it is possible to tie an old flysheet between trees

**(make sure it is a good distance above ground).**

When tents do catch fire, they do ignite very quickly.

Below are some photos of a typical nylon hike tent and canvas patrol tent which have been purposely set on fire - within 2 minutes of ignition there is nothing left, and anyone trapped inside will almost certainly have been very seriously burnt or killed.



A-Frame Tent in first 9 seconds



A-Frame Tent in 1 minute



A-Frame Tent after 2 minutes



Family-Size Tent in first 9 seconds



Family-Size Tent in 1 minute



Family-Size Tent after 2 minutes

*Photos courtesy of Scouting Magazine*

## GAS APPLIANCES

[Cooking on gas](#) and [reasons not to cook inside a tent](#) are covered within this site.

However, similar safety procedures cover gas lamps.

You should **NEVER** have a gas lamp inside a small tent, although it is permissible to have a large gas lamp on a table inside a dining tent.

**never** change a gas bottle inside a tent - any gas that leaks while changing the bottle will linger, and possibly ignite from a nearby source of ignition.

Also be aware of any naked flames nearby - this may be sufficient to ignite gas escaping from a bottle as you change it, and possibly cause the bottle to explode with disastrous consequences.

For further information on safety with gas, [click here](#).

## HEATH FIRES

From time to time, large forest fires start, and there is no way to do anything about it except get away from it as fast as you can. Make sure you know of at least two escape routes by road in all

directions. If a large forest fire is heading your way, never stop to 'strike' your site - if there is time gather up personal kit and get away as soon as possible.

*Please ensure that your campfire is completely out before leaving.  
Douse with water, scatter cinders and cover with dirt.  
Check it at least twice by pouring water and checking for "hisses".*

## REVIEW:

📌 Circle the pit with rocks or be sure it already has a metal fire ring.

📌 Clear a 10 foot area around the pit down to the soil.

### *Just a Little Common Sense*

Situate your fire at least 10 feet away from tents, trees, roots and flammable items.

📌 Keep plenty of water handy and have a shovel for throwing dirt on the fire if it gets out of control.

📌 Stack extra firewood upwind and away from the fire.

📌 Keep the campfire small.

A good bed of coals or a small fire surrounded by rocks give plenty of heat.

### **NO bonfires please!**

Build a fire only as big as you need.

Small fires are easier to tend, you can sit closer to them without getting a tan, and the wood pile will last longer.

Besides, you don't want kids roasting marshmallows or wieners over a bonfire.

📌 After lighting the fire, make sure your match is out cold.

📌 Never leave a campfire unattended. Even a small breeze could quickly cause the fire to spread.

📌 When extinguishing the fire drown the fire with water.

Make sure all embers, coals, and sticks are wet.

Move rocks, there may be burning embers underneath.

Stir the remains, add more water, and stir again.

📌 Feel all materials with your bare hand.

Make sure that no roots are burning.

Do not bury your coals -  
they can smolder and break out.

### 📌 fire restrictions

Before building any fires outdoors, check to be sure there aren't any fire restrictions. Ask the attendants when you arrive at the campground; or, if primitive camping, call the local forest district for information.

**Fines are heavy in any area that has fire restrictions  
so it is always in the best interest of everyone to check the situation out first.**


### 📌 Supervision

Supervise children at all times when fires are burning or when grills are in use.

 **STOP, DROP, AND ROLL.**


Make sure everyone knows how to put out a clothing fire -  
STOP, DROP, AND ROLL.

[See Emergency Fire Procedures](#)


 **first aid for burns**

The first response to a burn should be to apply ice or cold water.  
And it's also good advice to include burn ointment and bandages in your camping first aid kit.  
Sparks and dust flying around campfires can get into the eyes, so include saline eye wash in your kit too.


See more on First Aid for Burns by [Clicking Here!](#)

 **cooking over a campfire**


Unless you are experienced, campfires don't make very practical stoves.  
Sure, some foods taste good and are fun to cook over the campfire,  
but without appropriate utensils and a proper fire, the food will not cook correctly and you'll likely wind up with blackened cookware.

 **Do not build a fire on top of pine needles**


Dig down to the bare soil. Clear fire (sparks fly out) radius at least 8 feet around pit.

 **Burnable's Only**


Do not throw plastics, glass or aluminum into the campfire.  
It is very difficult to clean up.

 **Use only dead and down wood**

Never break branches from standing trees, even if they appear dead.

 **Bring along a small amount of firewood.**

The understory might already be picked clean of wood from earlier campers.  
Be prepared.

 **bring on the marshmallows**

But what's a campfire without the marshmallows?  
Just be careful to supervise young children and remember that marshmallows and other foods cooked over a campfire will be very hot at first.



## Little Tid Bits

In the absence of wind, smoke will always draw toward the nearest large object.  
This is why the person sitting closest to the fire may have the smoke follow them no matter where they sit.

To avoid this effect, try building your fire close to a large immovable object such as a rock.

Have you ever found your hands, hair or clothes covered in sticky pine or evergreen sap, when you've been searching for your firewood in a forest?

Washing the affected areas with baking soda instead of soap, really helps to remove the sap effectively!



## Campfire Magic

*Here are some nifty little chemical additions you can use to add a little magic to your next campfire.*

*The above is only a guide, and is not an exhaustive list and we can not be held responsible for any consequences of lighting a fire.*



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Breaking Camp

[\[Returning Home\]](#) [\[Gear Storage Tips\]](#) [\[How To Remove Mold and Mildew\]](#)

*All good things sooner or later come to an end, and the same goes for camping.*

*When it comes time to pack it up and head back to our other lives, consider these tips before departing:*

#### **stow your gear**

Use a whisk broom and/or rags to wipe off gear as you stow it; and, try to pack your gear as you had it when you came to the campground. Also, it's a good idea to separate dirty clothes, so that they will be ready to be washed when you arrive home.

#### **PACKING YOUR TENT**

Here are a few things to make a habit of when packing the tents

- **Make sure all belongings are out of the pouches you may have for personal items.**

**It's no fun unpacking the tent because someone can't find their watch**

- **Sweep the tent floor clean.**

**Carry a small cheap dust broom and dustpan. If there is any dried mud splashed on the tent most of it will probably brush away too.**

- **Always stuff a tent back into its stuff-sack; don't fold it.**

**Creases from folds can weaken fabric fibers.**

**When it is folded to width the door should be at one end on the "strip". Then roll TOWARDS the door. Air will escape easily and the tent will roll nicely. Do not roll any tighter than necessary to get it into the**

**supplied sack.**

- **Always air out a tent before putting it away to prevent rotting and staining from mildew.**

**If you must pack the tent wet get it dried as soon as possible.**

**Try to avoid getting it too hot until it is dried. In addition to mildew, I have heard of some coated fabrics sticking together after a steaming.**

**📌 check the cooler**

Dispose of any food wastes, empty out excess water, and replenish the ice, as needed, for the trip home.

**📌 dowse the campfire**

Make sure the campfire is out; dowse the area with the excess water from your cooler or another source.

**Remember,**



**"Only you can prevent forests fires!"**

**📌 GATHER ALL TRASH**

To state it simply,  
["leave no trace!"](#)

**📌 police the area**

A broom and a leaf rake come in handy for grooming the campsite and gathering up the last of any litter.

**📌 one more**



**potty break**

Before leaving, take advantage of this opportunity to take a final bathroom break and to wash up a bit.

**📌 final walk around**

One last check, walk around your vehicle and look around the campsite to see if anything was missed.

 **say goodbyes**


Until next time . . .

## Returning Home

*The ride home after a camping trip can be long, particularly when you have a hot shower and cozy bed waiting there for you. But, before relaxing, some final chores need to be done:*

 **unload gear**

First things first, unload your car, truck or camper and separate everything used on the camping trip.

 **empty the cooler**

Remove all food from your cooler and place it in the refrigerator, then rinse the cooler and allow to dry.

 **store food items**

Return all remaining foods to the pantry or cupboard.

 **wash the dishes**


Even if you did it at the campground before leaving, it's still a good sanitary practice to wash them again.

 **dispose of trash**

Gather up and dispose of any remaining trash.  
Also a good time to whisk out the car or truck of any debris.

 **do the laundry**

Before washing, shake out all your camping clothes and bedding,  
**especially the kids' clothing.**

 **stow away the gear**

Shake out all your gear too. If any gear is wet, lay it out, or set it up to dry, before packing it for storage.

Mildew is much easier to prevent than it is to remove.

Mold and mildew can be a problem for camping gear, but with a little prevention it can be avoided.

1. At camp, when gear gets wet, allow it to dry completely before packing up.
2. Air out your tents, sleeping bags, and bedding on a daily basis.
3. After the trip, be sure your camping gear is dry before stowing it away.

4. If your tent is wet, set it up at home to air out and dry in the sun.
5. Store your camping gear in a dry, ventilated area.

*Little Tip*

1. *After cleaning and drying it sometimes helps to use a fungicide spray on areas previously affected by mold.*
2. *Throw a sheet of Fabric Softener in your tents, sleeping bags, etc. before folding and rolling up and putting away!*

[Click Here](#)

[To Learn How To Remove Mold & Mildew](#)

***Camping should be stress free & fun!***

Good preparation in advance can make the start of your trip a breeze.  
Store all your camp gear cleaned & in one common area.

- 📌 No matter how tired you are after a long trip, do not stick that kitchen storage box away in the garage.  
You may discover soiled dishes  
&  
"the mold from hell"  
three months later when you go to use it again.
- 📌 After every camp trip, bring the "mess box" into your kitchen at home.
- 📌 Over the next few days clean every dish, re-stock those goods: paper plates, towels, plastic forks, etc.
- 📌 Repack the entire kitchen mess box as if it is 'ready to go' again & then put it away.

It will be a nice treat to easily access your goods the next time you wanna bolt out the door for a spontaneous camp trip.

Large refillable 5-10 gallon water containers are available with a faucet type fitting.

Store the container with the lid off & a rag in it.

**gear storage tips**

*Before sitting down and reminiscing about the trip, the final chore of storing the camping gear still needs to be done. But first, if you haven't already done so, start a gear check list:*

📌 [make a check list](#)

Take inventory of your gear as you store it and note any broken gear that needs repair, missing items that need to be replenished or items that you

wish you had.

### **high and dry**

Storing gear high helps keep it away from rodents and insects; keeping it dry helps avoid mildew.

### **avoid freezing**

Any moisture in materials can cause damage from expansion when freezing; and some materials, even when dry, may crack in very cold temperatures.

### **food smells**

Rodents are attracted to the smell of food and can quickly ruin your gear chewing through it to look for food that is no longer there.

To avoid these pests, be sure to air out or wash all gear that smells of food.

### **remove batteries**

To avoid any possibilities of corrosion, remove the batteries from any gadgets and store them separately.

### **where to next?**

Plans for your next camping destination begin with the check list, and with adding any new items that may further your enjoyment of the great outdoors.

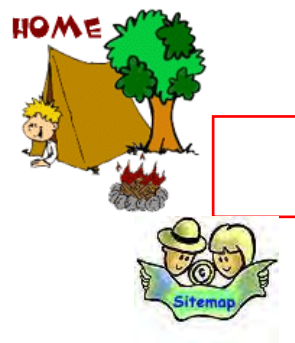
## **How To Remove Mold and Mildew**

Mildew, a dark residue left by mold, can leave a stubborn stain. If mold or mildew has invaded your tent, canvas or awning, you can easily remove it.

1. First, kill the mold.
2. Brush the mold and mildew from the material.
3. Wash the affected area with a solution made up of 1/2 cup Lysol to a gallon of hot water.
4. And/or rinse with a solution of 1 cup of lemon juice and 1 cup of salt to a gallon of hot water.
5. Allow the material to dry in the sun.
6. Next, bleach the mildew stain.
7. Wash or soak the affected area with one of the following, depending on the material.
8. For most fabrics, you can use a non-chlorine bleach.
9. For colored fabrics, use a solution of 1 cup of lemon juice and 1 cup of salt to a gallon of hot water.
10. For color safe fabrics, use a solution of 2 tablespoons of bleach to a quart of water.
11. Allow the bleached area to dry thoroughly.

#### **Tips:**

1. Brush the materials outdoors so as not to leave mold spores in the house.
2. Be sure your camping gear is dry before stowing it away.
3. Store your camping gear in a dry, ventilated area.



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# LEAVE NO TRACE

*Leave No Trace;  
Low Impact Camping;  
No Trace Camping;  
Walking Softly in the Wilderness;*

*Call it what you will  
it all means one thing . . .*

*how to lessen your impact on the natural environment you are visiting.*

*It is everyone's responsibility*

*including yours*

*to learn how to walk softly in the wilderness.*

*Read all you can about the subject, including this page, then preach and teach what you have learned.*

*Together we can all make a difference towards sustaining a primitive wilderness for the visitors of the future.*

*Nobody likes a dirty campground!*

*Whether you are primitive camping, or RVing at a campground resort, a little effort is all that need be spent in order to ensure that the next camper arriving at the campsite after you will enjoy it just as much.*



## Leave NO trace

It's all about respect for nature.

If all campers would just leave their campsites the way they found them  
(assuming it was clean to begin with)

then we will be doing our share to promote camping as it should be.

pack it in, pack it out

Another way of saying "leave no trace", a concept which I cannot emphasize enough. If you are a backcountry camper, this is particularly important, because there are no dumpsters in the backcountry.

Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods.  
Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.

### **Leave What You Find**

Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.

Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.  
Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

### **dumpsters**

Be sure to take along some plastic garbage bags to collect trash. The last thing you should do before leaving the campground is to make one more round and pick up any trash and put it in the dumpster.

### **gray water**

This is old dishwater, which should not be dumped just anywhere. In the backcountry be sure to dump gray water away from any fresh water sources and use biodegradable soap.



Campgrounds usually have designated areas for dumping gray water.

### **laundries, restrooms and showers**

Simply clean up after yourself.  
In the backwoods, take appropriate measures to cover human waste.

### **fish cleaning stations**

Use them!  
Don't clean your catch at the campground.



### **Minimize Campfire Impacts**

Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound



fires.  
Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.  
Burn all wood and coals to ash,  
**put out campfires completely,**  
then scatter cool ashes.



**ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES.**

### **ashes from the grill**

Don't dump your ashes on the ground.  
Either dump them in the campfire ring or dump them in a bag and put the bag in the campground dumpster.

### **Respect Wildlife**

Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.

Never feed animals.

Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.

Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.

Control pets at all times,  
or leave them at home.

Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

For all activities, remember to "take only pictures, leave only footprints."

Always leave your picnic or campsite cleaner than you found it.

Allow the next person to enjoy the flowers, wildlife, and scenery as much as you did.

Teach your children to be observers, not intruders, since they are only visitors.

It's a good lesson for kids — respect for the environment carries over to self-respect and respect for others.



Above all,  
remember the basic rule:

## Leave No Trace



<http://www.lnt.org/TeachingLNT/LNTEnglish.php>

It's an old proverb, but it should be the foundation of all your travels in the wilderness:

**Take only memories, leave only footprints.**

*To be taken literally, not figuratively.*



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Be Ecological Friendly

*You manage to drag yourself off the couch, congratulations! You've packed up your ride and are heading out to your favorite "secret" spot.*

*Anticipation builds as you arrive and pull into the empty lot. Your heart sinks however when you discover that your once pristine camp spot has been transformed into the new town dump. An old lawn chair, candy wrappers and beer cans litter the area that you once loved. Impromptu fire rings are strewn about and armies of weekend warriors have trampled your favorite meadow into a dust bowl.*

Disruptive teens, local yokels, urban mishaps, home boys, totally oblivious yuppies & even uneducated families . . .

If it must be done . . .

**let's keep the trash & tagging in the cities!**

**Give Mother Nature her respect!!!!**

Most campers make an effort not to litter, but pollution is a major problem!

Many people do pollute - not realizing that they are doing so.

Please be aware that anything unnatural that you introduce to the outdoors will have some impact.

## Litter and Pollution

### Pollution

#### Soap

This includes dish soap, shampoo, and any other cleaner you may use. Many people use Comet or other powdered cleansers around their campsite to keep the ants away. These compounds contain bleach. When it rains, your campsite vegetation will get a bath in bleach.

This is not healthy for your camping environment!

Water spigots are polluted regularly. these areas are for filling up your

water containers. These areas are not for dish washing, hair washing, or dumping. Vegetation seeks out any source of water. Would you water your own plants with a healthy dose of Dawn dish detergent?

Dirty dish water can contain all kinds of bacteria. Anything you dump from your dish drainer can contaminate the surrounding area.  
Please dump your dish water into a drain or a pit toilet!

Be kind to the environment and select an Earth friendly dish detergent especially when camping if you can.

### **Other Chemicals**

Chemical toilets and RV's use special chemicals to dissolve the waste. These chemicals are not meant to prepare your sludge for public toilets! Gray water and black water should be dumped in the appropriate places - at a dumping facility! These wastes will clog most public bathrooms and actually erode pumping equipment used to empty pit toilets. If you put the toilets out of order in your camping area you may make a lot of people angry

-  
as well as finding yourself with a large fine.  
Please use the camping facilities wisely!

### **Litter**

Everyone knows that litter is a bad thing, but it doesn't seem to help too much in some areas!

When you go camping please keep in mind that the following items do not bio-degrade easily!

### **Cigarette Butts**

These are found everywhere.

I am a smoker myself, but please dispose of your butts correctly. Cigarette butts are made of fiberglass - and they will not decompose.

Make sure your cigarette is completely out -  
if you cause a forest fire, you get the bill for putting it out!

Many fires are caused by cigarettes added to a dumpster.

Please dispose of your cigarette butts -  
but do it with care!

### **Styrofoam**

This is another chemical compound that will not decompose. Please do not try to burn styrofoam in your camp fire. Styrofoam is toxic when inhaled and could cause damage to your lungs. People have died while melting styrofoam in an inclosed space. If it can kill you under certain circumstances -

it should be left alone and not burned.

Better yet, don't buy styrofoam products at all.  
They are not good for the environment.

### **Aluminum Foil**

This is an item you will find in almost every fire pit you see. This stuff

doesn't burn or melt at the temperatures you will achieve with your camp fire.

This includes aluminum cans -  
beer cans do not burn.

*Another thing you may not know about aluminum cans is that they have a serial number on the bottom of the can. The serial numbers are sequential.*

*If you toss a beer can outside of your vehicle -  
you can be caught!*

*All a park ranger has to do is match the serial number from the beer in your hand or car to a can found on the roadway. If the serial numbers match -  
you'll get one heck of a big ticket!*

### **Diapers**

Pack out dirty Diapers!!!  
It is downright gross to see and smell  
and  
pretty cruel for the animals to eat it  
(for they will)

Diapers are not biodegradable and nobody but you should have to touch them. You may feel comfortable handling dirty diapers -  
but why should your campground hosts have to handle this waste?  
Please dispose of dirty diapers on your own in an appropriate waste receptacle.

(This does not include a fire pit or a toilet - use a trash can please!)

### **Food**

Although you may not find leaving food items in your campsite litter -  
others may.

Corn cobs do not disappear overnight and neither do chicken bones. Some food items left behind can actually cause damage to the local wildlife. Chicken bones will splinter and can cause distress or death in local wildlife.

Food left behind attracts insects -  
stinging ones.

### **Paper**

is a terrible litter problem found in most parks.

Many people decide to clean out their glove box or purse while camping. A friend of mine who used to be a Park Employee told me that about one quarter of the paper he picked up while working in the parks had either a credit card number on it or a name.

If a ranger walks up to you with a handful of litter with your name on it -  
you could have a problem!

Be smart and leave your parks clean.

### **Camping & Picnicking**

 Take out some litter; Leave the site cleaner than you found it

- 📌 Use existing campsite to prevent impacting new areas
- 📌 Pitch tents in cleared camp spots only (when primitive camping)

## Camp Fires

- 📌 Build campfires in designated rings ONLY!
- 📌 If you must build a new rock ring, follow the guide on [Campfire Safety](#)
- 📌 Gather wood for fuel -- use only down wood
- 📌 Never burn plastics or other toxic materials in campfires
- 📌 Tossing beer bottle caps into a campfire only litters the site for future campers
- 📌 Always douse campfire with water completely when breaking camp  
[See our Campfire page](#)
- 📌 Teach your children not to litter or deface nature
- 📌 Obey signs & instruct kids on dangers of the wilderness.

## Hiking

- 📌 Stay on designated trails
- 📌 Don't cut switch backs
- 📌 Pack out more than you packed in

Most people know the basic rule of camping.  
Leave your site cleaner than you found it.

Camping fees have gotten out of hand in many places -  
but I assure you that the employees who will clean your campsite are not  
benefiting from these cost increases.

Many people seem to think that leaving the campsite a mess is a fair trade  
for the camping fees.

Don't punish the wrong people!

Please help keep our parks clean!

*"Every time I encounter a display of graffiti in a wilderness area, two  
questions pop into my mind.*

- 1. Why would someone despoil a pristine area in that fashion?*
- 2. Who the heck carries a can of spray paint with them when they're out  
hiking, camping, etc.?*

*It's tough enough maintaining the illusion of wilderness as we're out in areas that are close to populated areas maybe only a few miles from a highway, but it feels like wilderness to us.*

*As we stare out into the mornings mist and gaze at the beauty of the wilderness and lose all concept of the reality of our daily busy lives!*

*Graffiti is a visual affront that destroys that illusion. It destroys the illusion for years and years to come. Those that yield a can of spray paint must realize that they are destroying not just a rock face,*



*but an entire section of scenery and landscape, and the damage they cause will remain for many years.*

*Particularly despicable are those that have defaced historical / spiritual native pictograph sites with their modern day senseless graffiti. "*

### **What's the worst that can happen?**

Misuse & sheer disregard is how lands get closed & turned into "off limit" roads & closed wildernesses.



*Graffiti, Soda Cans, and Cigarette Butts are a nuisance to nature.*



As more and more office drones venture from their cubicles and out onto the unbeaten path, they leave behind the remnants of their bold treks for all to see. Refuse, human waste, smoldering campfires and crushed flora from selfish tent placements and trail blazing destroy our fragile eco-system and pollute the environment for years to come.

- Be cautious walking around to avoid destroying the fragile ecosystems, such as seedlings, wildlife & wildflowers.

- Pick up all your trash & even some left behind by previous campers. Leaving the site in better condition than you found it.



## Cleaning & Potty Breaks

- No Soap in Streams, Creeks or Lakes: Even Biodegradable Soaps is not good for fish downstream.

- Bring a bucket or wash tub

- Wash dishes & yourself 100' from streams & lakes

- Tinkle break in the bushes?

Don't leave that TP trash. Dispose of in your vehicle with a plastic bag.

For human waste

- Bring a shovel, dig holes 8" deep & pack out all toilet paper.

Do not bury paper as animals will just dig it up.



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## When Nature Calls



### When Nature Calls and You're in Nature

Note: Adapted and excerpted from 'Soft Paths' (1995)  
by Bruce Hampton and David Cole

This can be a touchy subject for some people.

I will take it very seriously, because going poo-poo and wee-wee in the wilderness is a serious subject.

It really is a subject worth discussing. How we handle human waste in the back country has a major impact on the environment and our health.

There are six methods of handling it:

- [1. Outhouses or Bathrooms](#)
- [2. Pack it out](#)
- [3. Cat Holes](#)
- [4. Surface Disposal](#)
- [5. Latrine](#)
- [6. Go wherever you feel like it - Who cares?](#)

Number one in the list is the most preferable since the **outhouses and bathrooms** have been provided for you in appropriate locations. For many family campers and car campers this is the obvious choice.



For locations where outhouses/bathrooms are unavailable **Packing it Out** is the best choice. It may not be the most practical or the favorite choice, but in terms of environmental impact it is the best. Usually, this is done by boaters or horse packers since they can carry portable toilets. Backpackers and campers however can pack it out

if they choose to do so. Use a brown paper back inside of a heavy duty ziplock bag that has been covered in duct tape. Be sure to mark the bag well so there are no unpleasant surprises.



For those that can't or decide not to pack it out, the most common choice for backpackers and campers when bathrooms are not around is number three - **Cat Holes**. The best site for a cat hole is at least 200 feet from any water source, trail, or campsite. Using a garden trowel (often called a "woogie shovel") dig a hole 6 to 8" deep and 6" wide. Take care of business in the hole, and when you are finished just stir in some dirt with a stick and cover with 2 to 4" of topsoil. Make sure you cover the area with leaves, sticks, and duff to make the site camouflaged.



Next up is **Surface Disposal**. This is done by smearing the feces with a rock or a stick so that it is completely exposed to the sun and air. This increases the rate of decomposition. Surface disposal is not legal in some places so be sure to check before you do this. It should also only be done where there is little soil in remote areas that people are unlikely to visit. Also, make sure that it is at least 200 feet away from water.



A **Latrine** is sort of like a cat hole, only it is bigger and used by more than one person. It is a pit that is at least 12" deep and 16" wide. After someone is done, they should cover it up with soil and compress it. When the latrine gets to within 4" of the top it should be completely filled in and camouflaged. Once again, make sure the latrine is at least 200 feet away from water. Latrines have become less favorable because they create a much larger impact than scattered cat holes.

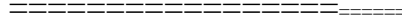
Finally, we've come to option number six -  
**Go Wherever-Who Cares.**

Unfortunately, some people choose this method more frequently than you might think. It leads to contaminated water which leads to health hazards, and it can be quite a disgusting discovery if you are the next person to come along. This is the worst method of handling human waste, and it should never be done. Enough said about that.

There is one last thing that needs covering, and that's the use of toilet paper. If you use methods [one](#) or [two](#) (bathrooms and outhouses or packing it out), then toilet paper is fine. If you use the other methods and choose to use toilet paper you should at least pack it with you until you can burn it in a very hot camp fire. A better option is to use Mother Nature's TP. This can be sticks (avoid bumpy ones), leaves ([avoid poison ivy](#)),

rocks (avoid sharp ones), and my personal favorite - snow (avoid yellow snow). You might be surprised how comfortable it can be, and the snow can be invigorating and refreshing as well!

So the next time nature calls when you're in nature, you will know what to do and how to do it. For more detailed information on handling human waste in the wilderness as well as Leave No Trace outdoor ethics, just pick up a copy of Soft Paths (1995) by Bruce Hampton and David Cole. You should also check out the Leave No Trace web site at: [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org)




Article by Lukas Lamb - Owner, [www.BetterCamper.Com](http://www.BetterCamper.Com)




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**FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING**  
**Animals**

Each year, thousands of campers lose food and equipment to persistent bears, raccoons, ground squirrels and other animals.

*I enjoy communing with nature.  
 I just don't like it when nature tries communing back.*

**Avoiding Unwanted Animal Visits**



**STOP** Click Here  
**Read This**

- [[Raccoons](#)] [[Bears](#)] [[Snakes](#)] [[Cougar, mountain lion, puma](#)] [[Wolf](#)] [[Moose](#)] [[Birds](#)]

If you go camping, chances are, you and critters are soon going to cross paths. Most every area is going to have its share of skunks, possums, and raccoons, but, depending on the area, you may very well see bears, muskrats, mice, snakes, snapping turtles, and any number of

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other animals.

It's a slim possibility that you may see a bobcat or coyote or fox, but these animals are much more wary, and you should be very cautious if you see a fox close by, for instance, because they often carry rabies, and any healthy, self-respecting fox wouldn't remain visible for more than an instant.

**National parks and other campsites are alive with wildlife, from birds to bears to chipmunks to snakes to fish. It's tempting to lure some of those animals into your campsite with food, just to get a closer look. But do yourself a favor and resist the temptation.**

It's important to remember that wild animals are not zoo or domesticated animals.

These creatures are anything but tame.

"The wilds are wild".

Just because you enter through a gate doesn't mean this is a kept place. The wildlife you encounter should be extended great respect. Look at them, enjoy them, But enjoy them from a safe distance and stay on the trails."

**Never feed wildlife when you're camping. Even if you escape the close encounter without losing a finger, the next family to land in the same campsite might not be so lucky.**

**These animals are smart.**

**Once they know they've been fed at a certain location, they will instinctively return.**

**Eventually, someone will get hurt when the animal's natural instinct to be fed poses a physical danger to humans.**

The best thing to avoid critter encounters is to set up your campsite so that's it's not quite so attractive to the "beasties".

Leaving food out overnight almost assures a midnight visitor. Skunks and raccoons in particular are pretty brave about raiding your campsite if there is a tasty meal as a reward. Put away all food before you go to bed. Seal everything if possible and tuck away as best you can.

## *Raccoons, Ground Squirrels and Skunks*

Although most wild animals are afraid of people, some of them may still approach our campsites.

**DO NOT feed them.**

This not only hampers the animal's natural instincts but it encourages them to make repeat visits.

They may even decide to help themselves.

**ALWAYS** store your food away in a car or a **BIG HEAVY** sealed **TIGHT** container!

**NEVER** leave food in your tent.

**These animals can and will do a lot of damage.**

*Never leave other smellies (deodorant, tooth paste, shampoo, etc.) in your tent (especially in bear country).*

*Never leave food and smellies in a zipped pack, jacket, duffel bag, etc. Hungry animals will literally chew holes in your nice equipment to get to the food.*

These creatures of the night are out to steal your food and cause general dismay at your campsite.

Although they are cute to look at, they are still wild creatures.

Observe them from a distance and don't leave food out where they can get into it.

**Store food inside your car**

A plastic or metal ice chest will protect foodstuffs from ravaging raccoons and ground squirrels, but there is no acceptable portable container that will reliably discourage bears. Ground squirrels and raccoons have very sharp teeth and will bore right through a fabric packsack.

Best recommendation is to store food in your vehicle.

***Raccoons can open twist lids!***

Even if your camping excursions are going to be limited to established campgrounds there are some things you need to know.

Otherwise you or at least your breakfast may be in jeopardy.

**The first rule is**

**NO FOOD IN THE TENTS....**

## **PERIOD!**

**Also**

**No Beverages in the tent other than water.**

**Ants.**

**Need I say more?**

The first thing this ensures if you are camping in regions with bears is that if a bear does wander onto your site it will be much less interested in your tent, or it's contents.

This means no storing of food and should also include not eating in the tent.

Make this your standard rule and you also have a good way to keep messy candy out of your tent(s) without being the bad guy.

Next you have to determine your level of risk. If you're conservative it's simple, all the food goes into the vehicle at night. Generally your biggest risk will be raccoons. If your food is in totes make sure they are tied securely closed with a bungee cord. This method is not foolproof, trust me. It is a lot of fun to wake up in the middle of the night and watch the raccoon flailing at the bungee cord. When you fall asleep it will quietly open the tote and have a field day. Different types of breads are very popular. However, onion bagels were not a big hit.

Perhaps putting a heavy drink cooler or such on top of the food tote may be of help.

When you get ready to turn in make sure you don't forget any munchies you had out on the table or by the fire. All it takes is one marshmallow that fell off a stick or out of the bag, peanut shell, one Cheeto, etc to fall on the ground. If you do forget to get your edibles packed away you may find yourself stumbling out of your tent to defend your Pringles, peanuts and marshmallows. Some of these campground varmints are quite comfortable around humans and may be perfectly happy to sit and wait you out while you try to scare him away without awakening all of your neighbors.

Did you use aluminum foil on a grill?

Raccoons and skunks will get the smell and come for it also. Don't bother to take it off and put it in a trash bag NOR any other FOOD ITEMS unless you take it to the dumpster that night!

We scrape all our plates and other scrap food (that didn't meet the family dog's approval) into the campfire.

The aluminum foil off the grill, the same thing.  
Be careful putting the foil into a fire for the grease will catch fast!

Because of the grease, most or all of the foil will burn away . .

**HOWEVER,**

**At the end of your camping escapade . . .  
It is your responsibility (your mess) to clean out the pit of  
all foil and food and anything else that did not get burned  
away!!!!**

You may even be greeted by a raccoon if you take a midnight stroll to the restroom.

You'll find them near trashcans or watching from up in trees.  
They're not going to bother you, just move along.



In the case of skunks, shine your light on them and make some small noise to let them know you're there and their presence is unwanted,

but

**leave them alone!**

Chances are you're sitting plop down in the middle of their nightly stroll for insects and since they know their awesome power, they just forge right on.

But they will eventually go away.

**Be wary of skunks though.**

We all know what they are capable of doing to our ol' factories, but they are also one of the major hosts for rabies. If a skunk has entered your campsite and is acting aggressive and getting too close for comfort, suspect rabies and avoid the skunk at all costs!

If you can stand it, moth balls are a pretty good deterrent for many critters,

so if you have some in your pack, it will keep them away.



## Bears



If you are in bear country the campground will usually make it very clear to when you check in. All food should be in your vehicle at night. The alternative is hanging bear proof food canisters in the trees. This is beyond the scope of this page and from what I've read isn't a sure bet either.



**Remember no  
food in the  
tents....  
this is serious  
stuff !**

I'm sure that in different locales there will be different varmints but generally a tidy site will serve you well.

*It never hurts to ask the campground hosts what to expect.*

The most common advice is to protect foodstuffs by

**#1. Store food inside your car.**

2.Suspend food cache-like from a tree limb at least 20 feet the ground.

Here are the realities and hazards of each . .

**Store food inside your car**

This is acceptable even in grizzly country providing you take

care to seal all car windows tightly. Bears (especially grizzlies) will insert their claws through the tiniest openings in windows and doors and rip out the glass or metal to get at food. Today's hardtop cars make it relatively easy for a determined bruin to steal food. For this reason, a car trunk is safer than an auto interior.

Expert campers usually do not store their food in trees to protect it from bears. Instead, they seal the food tightly in plastic to eliminate odors then remove the food from the immediate camp area. Setting the food pack outside the campsite perimeter is usually enough to foil hungry bruins and other animals. The rationale for this procedure is simple: Bears are creatures of habit - they quickly learn that camps, packs and tin cans contain food. In each campsite there is usually only one or two trees with limbs high enough to confidently suspend food packs. But bears aren't stupid; they know the location of these trees by heart and make daily rounds to secure whatever is suspended from them. When they find something (anything!) hanging from "their" tree, they'll get it down, one way or another. All black bears (even fat old sows) can climb to some degree. And cubs shinny like monkeys. If mamma can't get your food pack, the kids probably will! Only polar bears and grizzlies don't climb.

Recommendation: Double bag (in plastic) all foodstuffs, especially meats. Set food packs on low ground (to minimize the travel of odors) well away from the confines of the campsite. Separate food packs by 50 feet or more, an added precaution.

**Do not, as commonly advised, put food packs in trees!**

In truth, far more camping trips are ruined by raccoons, skunks, and smaller creatures than by bears. Raccoons, in particular, can be absolutely ingenious in figuring out ways to get into your cache of food.



## Snakes and Scorpions

### **Beware!**

As warmer weather approaches these critters become more active.

Learn how to identify the poisonous snakes and know what to do if bitten.

As a general rule, avoid all snakes in the outdoors.

All snakes "hear" by feeling vibrations in the earth through their bellies. They know you're walking up the trail long before you arrive, assuming of course that you wear shoes.

Being terribly nearsighted, snakes can only see you if you move. And, although it may seem like they move quickly, you can easily walk away from the fastest of them.

Snakes will run away from you if you give them an escape route. NO snake will attack you unless you provoke it or step on it. Most of the people bitten by poisonous snakes (*I believe well over 90%*) were trying to poke at it or capture it. Of the truly accidental bites, the majority are on the buttocks or hands.

***Moral:*** *Watch where you sit and reach out with your hands.*

### ***One final note:***

*Snakes are not evil or bad.*

*They serve the earth with honor.*

*Honor them.*

*Leave them alone.*



[Click Here for More on Snakes](#)



## Cougar , mountain lion, puma

Every adult cougar needs about 30 sq. miles to roam. That's the size of a mid-western county, so the odds of an encounter

are long. They also avoid human contact if possible. Only a child or injured person would be at any real risk of attack. If confronted you must appear aggressive and as large as possible. Pull your shirt open and stand tall.

Cougars will not normally attack anything larger than themselves. Never turn away or run. Unlike with the bear, always keep your eyes locked on the cougar's. Screaming might be useful too, if only for the soul.



## Wolf

A pack of starving wolves and a wounded human would be a scary situation. Fortunately, that usually only happens in the movies or TV. Wolves are as smart as the smartest breed of dog, only independent, and with highly structured societies. They know humans have to be avoided because it is the human, not the wolf, that is a terrifying killer. If you should encounter a wolf in the forest, consider it an omen. You have just been called to go out and explore beyond the obvious knowledge, and then return to your clan to teach them of these new things.

This is how the Indians saw it.



## Moose

The animal I give the most ground to is the moose. Most of them have nasty dispositions. In desert areas expect scorpions in log or debris piles. Keep your hands away and use a stick to turn items around before picking up. Always check sleeping bags before using. Tarantulas are not poisonous, just large furry spiders. They can bite, however. Give them some space.

## **Birds, crows, ravens, and gulls**

Observe the same precautions for birds as you would for the small animals and don't leave any food out at an unattended campsite.

## **Lions and Tigers and Bears, oh my!**

Just the thought of being alone in the wilderness is enough to make most folks shiver. Our heads fill with images of savage creatures just waiting to make us into dinner, all compliments of the silver screen. Who knows what perils await us during the night, alone, and deep in the wilderness?

Unless we happen to know the animals, this unfounded fear can paralyze us in survival situations. Staying put when you become lost can be a terrifying prospect as night falls and you are without matches for a fire or even a simple knife for protection. This fear is so ingrained that panic can overcome simple reasoning. For many, unfortunately, this proves to be fatal.

What is the real danger to you from wild animals?

**Almost none.**

The critters big enough to inflict serious damage to you (bear & cougar) will usually do everything in their power to avoid you. This is also true for rattlesnakes.

Actual attacks are extremely rare.

Usually the victim was asking for it by trying to get closer, luring them in with food scent (usually on their clothes), or by intentionally aggravating the animal.

***Just Remember . . .***

Most animals move and feed after dark. The scary noise you hear going bump in the night is probably only a doe and her fawn on their nightly rounds.

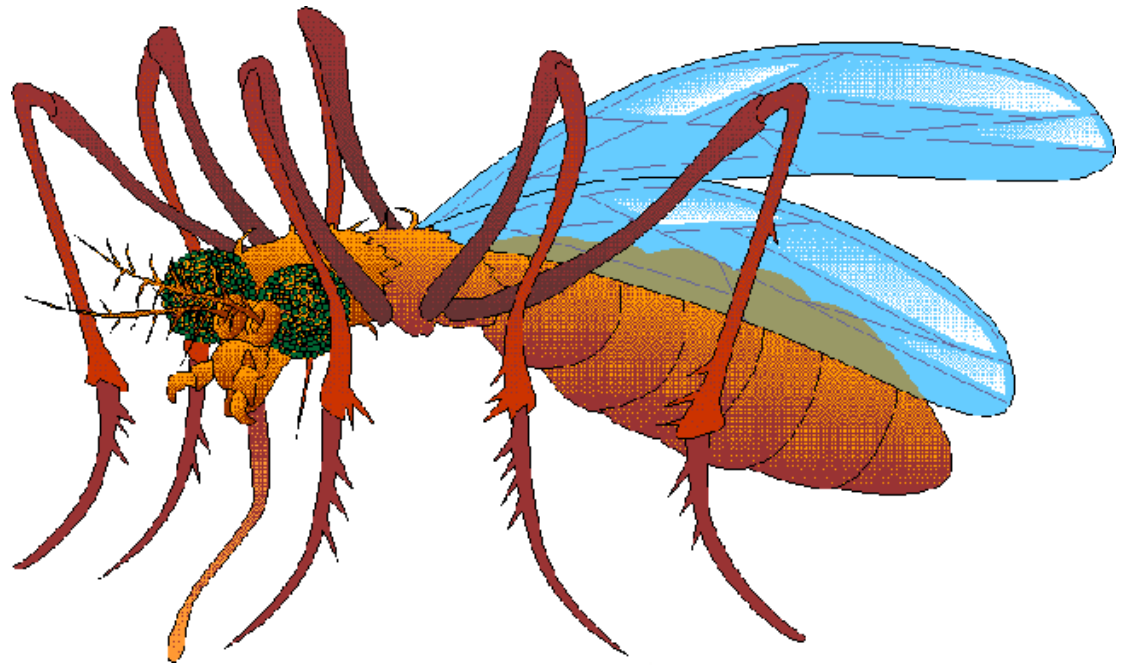
If there is only one thing that you learned from this page,  
I sure hope it was the fact . . .

# **NO FOOD IN THE**

# TENTS.... PERIOD!

Do you think we've resolved the critters?

Think again . . .



[Tell Me More!](#)



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Bugs



**Mosquitoes, fleas, gnat's, maggots, ants, moths, fly's, wasps, yellow jackets, meat bees, honey bees, hornets, ticks, chiggers, spiders, no see-ums, etc, etc . . .**

**They can make a camping trip miserable.**

If you find them at home, be assured you will find them in your camp. Most likely more of them, too.  
Then again, you may not find them at all.

When picking out a campground or campsite, try to stay far away from thick bushy woods, deep grass, stagnant ponds, out houses, garbage dumpsters and anything you think may attract the little creatures.

This also goes along with keeping your campsite clean of food crumb or drink spills.

Closed or dispose of garbage.

Pop cans are big with insects (*especially Sweat Bees*) because they are left usually sitting around while you slowly drink it.

**Be sure to always check inside  
before slugging down a gulp.**

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## Avoiding Pesty Bugs

There are many things you can purchase to help cut down on, but not eliminate these pests!

**How do you avoid them in the first place?**

Bugs have favorite colors, too!

Their two favorites are blue and black, so if you can avoid these, you're going to be one step ahead.

Tight cuffs on your shirts and pants are always a helpful addition; this keeps the bugs from crawling up your legs and arms.

Start a campfire (*if they're allowed*).

Bugs really dislike smoke, so this is a natural way to keep them at the neighbors.

Citronella candles work, but you have to stick fairly close to the candle to really get the benefits.

Don't camp right next to the water.

I know that this is where all the fun is, but the mosquitoes don't want to miss any of the fun either, so they're going to be there and they'll bring the whole family to join in the fun!

**It's been said taking garlic supplements, or eating garlic will lessen your chances of bug bites.**

Mosquito coils, body spray repellent, repellent lotion, citronella candles, and repellent sprays for your cloths, the less useful perimeter bug sprays and a whole lot more. You are going to have to decide what works best for you.

I have found that there is nothing that repels **everything**.

The mosquitoes are the biggest problem.

Therefore, something to do prior to setting up camp is to spray a bug killer under and around the table, (*bear box if in Bear Country*)

and anywhere we see fit.

Then set up the tents to give the sprayed areas a chance to air out. It is a good idea to then wash the areas where food will be stored or used. Then at night or anytime you feel the need to, light a couple of mosquito coils and/or citronella

candles upwind of your campsite.

When sitting down to eat, one can be moved to the table either under or near to it upwind. Besides that, also use spray repellent or lotion on each member of your party. This is a backup to the coils and/or candle, in case a mosquito gets to you anyway.

Again nothing will eliminate all, but coils and/or candle do seem to help cut down on them.

When buying a tent be sure it has insect screens on all doors and windows.

Other things you can buy are screened dining canopies.

For the person who wants extra protection, there are bug suits and head nets.

## Repellents

Usually bug repellents use a chemical nicknamed "DEET" in concentrations from 10-100% that is primarily effective for repelling mosquitoes and ticks. There has been some concern over safety, since it is a powerful chemical that is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream. Those products with 20-25% concentrations have been found effective, but for children, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than 10%.

Use DEET products sparingly, keeping it away from eyes, lips, or broken skin and off of children's hands which may end up in their mouth. Once it is not needed, wash it off with soap and water. Consider treating your clothes rather than your skin, but note that DEET can damage Spandex, rayon, acetate, waterproof coatings and the plastic in sunglasses.

Controlled release formulas work longer and minimize your exposure since you are applying it less frequently. Lotion formulas can repel bugs up to twice as long as liquids and sprays (of the same strength in active ingredients) which have a higher initial evaporation rate.

Natural repellents are only effective for a short period of time, and have limited repelling effects. They use essential oils such as citronella, citrus products, or other plant oils, and

though natural, can be irritating to the skin in high concentrations.

Travelers should be advised that permethrin-containing repellents (e.g., Permethrin or deltamethrin) are recommended for use on clothing, shoes, bed nets, and camping gear. Permethrin is highly effective as an insecticide and as a repellent.

Permethrin-treated clothing repels and kills ticks, mosquitoes, and other arthropods and retains this effect after repeated laundering. There appears to be little potential for toxicity from permethrin-treated clothing. The insecticide should be reapplied after every five washings.

Most authorities recommend repellents containing N,N-diethylmetatoluamide (DEET) as an active ingredient. DEET repels mosquitoes, ticks, and other arthropods when applied to the skin or clothing. In general, the more DEET a repellent contains, the longer time it can protect against mosquito bites. However, there appears to be no added benefit of concentrations greater than 50%. A microencapsulated, sustained-release formulation can have a longer period of activity than liquid formulations at the same concentrations. Length of protection also varies with ambient temperature, amount of perspiration, any water exposure, abrasive removal, and other factors.

No definitive studies have been published about what concentration of DEET is safe for children. No serious illness has arisen from use of DEET according to the manufacturer's recommendations. DEET formulations as high as 50% are recommended for both adults and children >2 months of age. Lower concentrations are not as long lasting, offering short-term protection only and necessitating more frequent reapplication. Repellent products that do not contain DEET are not likely to offer the same degree of protection from mosquito bites as products containing DEET. Non-DEET repellents have not necessarily been as thoroughly studied as DEET and may not be safer for use on children. Parents should choose the type and concentration of repellent to be used by taking into account the amount of time that a child will be outdoors, exposure to mosquitoes, and the risk of mosquito-transmitted disease in the area. The recommendations for DEET use in pregnant women do not differ from those for nonpregnant adults.

DEET is toxic when ingested and may cause skin irritation in sensitive persons. High concentrations applied to skin can cause blistering. However, because DEET is so widely used, a great deal of testing has been done, and over the long history of DEET use, very few confirmed incidents of toxic reactions to DEET have occurred when the product is used properly.

Travelers should be advised that the possibility of adverse reactions to DEET will be minimized if they take the following precautions:

Use enough repellent to cover exposed skin or clothing. Do not apply repellent to skin that is under clothing. Heavy application is not necessary to achieve protection. If repellent is applied to clothing, wash treated clothing before wearing again.

Do not apply repellent to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.

After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.

Do not spray aerosol or pump products in enclosed areas; do not breathe in.

Do not apply aerosol or pump products directly to the face. Spray your hands and then rub them carefully over the face, avoiding eyes and mouth.

When using repellent on a child, apply it to your own hands and then rub them on your child. Avoid the child's eyes and mouth and apply sparingly around the ears.

Do not apply repellent to children's hands. (Children tend to put their hands in their mouths.)

Do not allow children under ten years old to apply insect repellent to themselves; have an adult do it for them. Keep repellents out of reach of children.

Protect infants two months of age and under by using a carrier draped with mosquito netting with an elastic edge for a tight fit.

Bed nets, repellents containing DEET, and permethrin should be purchased before traveling and can be found in hardware, camping, sporting goods, and military surplus stores. Overseas, permethrin or another insecticide, deltamethrin, may be purchased to treat bed nets and clothes.

## **Natural Insect Repellents**

### **Cedar Oil**

Try a cedar oil spray. I get it at PetSmart & use it on the dogs, cats & kids - it may seem a bit pricey but one bottle lasts for awhile. There may be another source for it among herbal shops, natural food stores, etc. One tip for anyone using it for fleas - it's a REPELLANT and works best if used before you see any fleas. If you've already got fleas, the same company makes a shampoo.

-- Cindy

Newbury, OH

### **Rubbing Alcohol**

I found out many years ago, when I was a young teenager, that just splashing plain rubbing alcohol on me and allowing it to dry would deter mosquitoes from biting me. I am allergic to mosquito bites and develop huge welts everywhere they bite me. With the alcohol, they never bit me. And once it dries, it leaves a pleasant odor on the skin, not repugnant at all. Thought this might help. And it only costs less than 50 cents a bottle!

-- Linda G from Tennessee

### **Vaporub**

This is going to floor you, but one of the best insect repellents I have found and I am in the woods every day, is Vick's Vaporub. I rub it on my pants and legs to ward off ticks. If you can tolerate the smell it's pretty good.

-- Barbara

### **Marine's Choice**

I don't know how "organic" you want to go, or if it's just DEET you're trying to avoid. But here in Jacksonville, NC, home of Camp Lejeune Marine Corps Base, our "tough guy" Marines who spend a great deal of time "camping out" say that the very best mosquito repellent you can use is Avon Skin-So-Soft bath oil mixed about half and half with alcohol. I've tried it, and I have to admit it works just as well if not better than the commercial sprays. Actually, I just saw an ad on TV this week for Avon's own Skin-So-Soft insect repellent. I'm assuming it's made about the same way -- but it may turn out to be less expensive in the long run to mix your own. An added plus -- it smells great too.

-- Carol D.

### **Homemade Recipe**

20 drops Eucalyptus oil  
20 drops Cedarwood oil  
10 drops Tea Tree oil  
10 drops Geranium oil  
2 oz. carrier oil ( such as Jojoba )

Mix together in a 4 oz. container. Apply to skin as needed avoiding the eye area.  
Keep out of reach of children. Test on a small area of skin for sensitivities .  
Experiment with different percentages of essential oil.

-- GR

### **Vanilla**

One of the best natural insect repellants that I've discovered is made from the clear real vanilla (not the grocery store vanilla extract which is mostly alcohol). This is the pure vanilla that is sold in Mexico. It's cheap there if you know of someone that lives there or in the US close to the border. If not, health food stores usually carry it or can order it for you. I use it half vanilla and half water and find that it works great for mosquitoes and ticks, don't know about other insects. It's nice that you don't smell like a chemical plant but a cookie! I cannot use chemical insecticides, so I love the way this works and I hope you and your kids will also.

-- Sharon

### **Moth Balls**

To the person who needed natural insect repellent. This is not natural but if you put out moth ball in the yard where children can't find them, they are great for mosquito. Or make a mixture of 1part baby powder, 1 part flower of sulfur(found at drug stores), 1 part cornstarch. Mix in a ziploc bag, sprinkle on the ground.  
Repels most bugs.

-- Rose M

### **Catnip Concoction**

Make your own by filling a quart jar with some herbs from the mint family - catnip, spearmint, pennyroyal and then cover with apple cider vinegar. Shake twice a day for 2 weeks. Strain and either rub on or spray on.

-- Gary

### **Lavender Oil**

I just read about a pleasant solution, though, that worked for me last weekend in the mountains (lots of biting bugs, but they pretty much left me alone.) Use lavender oil, and dab it on your pulse points (I used it on my wrists, behind my ears, temples, behind my knees, and on my ankles). Smells wonderful, but apparently the insects don't think so.

- JT

*I, The Webmaster of this site have not tried any of these techniques, yet*

**Uh- oh, I've been bit or stung!  
Now what?**

The first thing that you have to figure out is what bit or stung you!



## Flies and Mosquitoes



These pests can quickly bring an end to your comfort around the campground, so take along something that will repel these little nasties. Citronella candles help keep them away from the immediate area, but for thorough protection you may need to apply a bug repellent to your skin.

*The number of mosquitoes at any given location is inversely proportional to the amount of repellent that remains.*



📌 Stay away from wet, grassy areas.

Any still stagnant water or swampy wet meadows

📌 Avoid using fragrant or scented personal products.

📌 Wear light colored long sleeve shirts and pants.

**Colors:** Dark colors, especially navy blue and black, attract insects. Powder blue, yellow, mist-green, white and other light colors have a neutral or mild repelling effect.

Mosquitoes come out right after a rain, so it's best to avoid dark blue rain suits. Air-force blue wool pants and shirts are an abomination in the woods and are nearly impossible to wear on buggy days.

Contrary to popular belief, red does not repel black flies. Red is a fairly neutral color which neither repels nor attracts insects.

📌 Wear a hat and a bandana on your head and neck.

📌 Keep cool - bugs are attracted to sweat.

📌 Traditional bug repellent - most contain DEET as the active ingredient against bugs. Use this sparingly. This chemical may be harmful and should not be used on children.

*N. N-Diethylmetatoluamide, commonly known as DEET.*

*The higher the percentage of DEET, the more effective (and expensive) the repellent.*

*Products which contain more than 80 percent DEET are highly effective but may burn sensitive skin, a factor to consider if you're camping with children*

- Liquid or cream repellents are much more potent (a better buy) than sprays.

-**BEN GAY** is a surprisingly good insect repellent.

📌 Sunscreen/insect repellent  
this may have a lower concentration of DEET.

📌 Avon Skin So Soft - tests don't prove this but many insist that it works.

📌 Citronella candles and oil  
helps keep mosquitoes out of the area.

📌 Build a small fire, smoke will keep most bugs away

📌 Zip up tent door always. Even if you're just in for a minute

📌 Turn off flashlight before entering the tent.  
Moths may follow the light in with you.

📌 Garlic - it will secrete through your pores.

📌 Zinc or Vitamin B  
also secretes through your pores.

📌 Citrus - deters the bugs.

📌 Camp in the cooler months, Spring & Fall

If you have been bit by a mosquito, it's going to be a little sore, but there's not much that you can do about it.

You might try a cool, damp washcloth if it stings or some calamine lotion if it itches.

*-Household ammonia and water will cut the sting of mosquito bites.*

## **Noseeums**

Biting Midges, "no-see-ums," "punkies," or "sand flies"

They are very small flies (about 1/25-1/10) inch long whose small but blade-like mouthparts make a painful wound out of proportion to its tiny size. Welts and lesions from the bite may last for days. The larvae of various species breed in a wide variety of damp or wet places high in organic matter. Most are attracted to lights. One vicious biter breeds along the Atlantic coast in salt marshes and wet soil. Another species, found in mountainous areas, feeds in the evening and night hours and is small enough to pass through ordinary

screens. These are important pests along coastal and mountainous areas and can seriously interfere with outdoor activities.

These tiny biting gnats are small enough to fly through standard mesh bug netting. They bite with a fiery nip. Noseem tent netting will stop these critters cold; however, noseem net is so tightly woven that ventilation may be a problem in muggy weather.

Head nets are best constructed of dark-colored standard mesh mosquito net, both for good visibility and ventilation. It's difficult to see through the milk-colored noseem net supplied with many tents.

#### Prevention Against Biting Flies

- Be sure to use repellents containing R-326 (Di-n-propyl Isocinchomeronate). R-326 is more effective than deet against flies. "Composite" repellents are best because they contain R-326 for flies, deet for mosquitoes and ticks, plus the synergist MGK-264 that maximizes the effectiveness of both. Commonly available composite insect repellent products include: Bens Backyard Formulas Tick and Insect repellent, Cutter Insect Repellent Spray and Sawyer Broad Spectrum Insect Repellent.
- Spray tents and clothing with permethrin. It lasts up to two weeks and is not washed off by rainwater. Permethrin will also kill ticks and mosquitoes.
- Dispose of litter, garbage, manure and decaying matter.
- Avoid areas of standing water where flies and mosquitoes may breed. If possible, dispose of standing water.
- Use window and door screens. Repair holes promptly.
- Spray screens with permethrin to keep out tiny no-see-ums, fruit flies and pomace flies. Permethrin is effective for up to two weeks and will also kill ticks and mosquitoes.

#### Treatment of Fly Bites

- Use an extractor pump to create a strong vacuum to suction out poisons and other foreign fluids. This will relieve pain, itching and swelling and perhaps reduce the risk of more serious allergic reactions.
- Wipe the bite with a benzocaine anesthetic for fast pain relief.

**Okay, you have used every preventive measures and still you have been stung or munched on.**

For this, you can purchase one of these products: [Benadryl](#), [Sting Eze](#), [Afterbite](#), [Lanacane](#), [Campho-phenique](#) or something similar to these.

These will help with the sting or itching from a bite.

**In any case always watch for an allergic reaction.**



Signals of allergic reactions may develop quickly. They include a rash, difficulty breathing, a feeling of tightness in the chest and throat, and swelling of the face, neck and tongue. Person may feel dizzy or confused.

Severe allergic reaction can become life threatening if not treated at once.

• **Insects that sting include:**



Bumblebees  
Honeybees  
Hornets  
Wasps  
Yellow jackets  
Fire ants



Disturb their nests and you will be attacked. All of the bees are active throughout the warm weather months, but late summer and early fall, when their numbers are highest, are particularly troublesome times. Ground nesting yellow jackets frequently choose banks along back country trails to build, while both wasps and hornets seem partial to limbs overhanging water. Several types of bees are attracted to foods in camp. Anyone who has a history of allergic reactions needs to be particularly cautious, and should flee immediately after disturbing a nest, then assess the situation after you have gotten away from the danger. Obviously you should carefully examine your surroundings before setting up camp.

Usually these nasty flying things are nothing more than a quick,  
painful **OUCH!**

But, you still want to get the stinger and poison out. The first thing you want to do is remove the stinger.

**You DO NOT do this by grabbing it and pulling,**  
that only injects more poison.

Get a credit card or knife and scrape at the stinger, it should come out. Now, get either some baking soda, or if you can't find any, grab a little dirt, mix either of them with water,

making a paste, and apply it to where you were stung, when it dries, it will pull the stinger out with it.

### **Symptoms**

Most often, the symptoms that come from these insect stings include:

Quick, sharp pain  
Swelling  
Itching  
Redness at the sting site  
Hives

**Insect stings can even result in a severe allergic reaction.**

**PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD A SEVERE, SYSTEMIC ALLERGIC REACTION NEED TO SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION**

Approximately 10% of the population develop severe hypersensitivity to bee and yellow jacket stings. When they are stung or bitten, their entire body is affected (a systemic allergic reaction).

This can result difficulty in breathing, and even shock.

Severely allergic people should carry a syringe of epinephrine with them for self-injection in case they are stung. Epinephrine is available by prescription only. It can be dangerous for some people, so it's definitely something to talk with your doctor about if you think a severe sting allergy is a consideration.

#### **Symptoms of this include:**

Severe swelling, all over and/or of the face, tongue, lips  
Weakness, dizziness  
A difficult time breathing or swallowing  
Airway obstruction or shock

Symptoms of a severe allergic reaction usually happen soon after or within an hour of the sting. A severe allergic reaction can be life-threatening.

**It needs immediate**

## emergency care.

If you've ever had an allergic reaction to an insect sting in the past, you should carry an emergency kit that has:

### **Adrenalin**

(a medicine called epinephrine that stops the bodywide reaction) and a device with a needle to inject it

### **An antihistamine**

An inhaler that contains adrenalin

Instruction sheet that explains how to use the kit

You have to get this kit from your doctor. You should also wear a medical alert tag that lets others know that you are allergic to insect stings. Persons who have had severe reactions in the past to bee or wasp stings should ask their doctor about allergy shots.

If you or someone that you are with gets stung,  
**and they're allergic,**

Be sure that you have your "EPI-KIT" with you, if you're the one that's allergic, and be sure to tell the person that you're with that you have it. That way, if you get stung, and you can't tell them, they already know and be sure that both of you know how to use the kit.

## **Seek Medical Attention!**

There are also kits you can buy at the store.

I have never used one

(Although we have one included in our First Aid Kit  
and am not sure if it is as EFFECTIVE as what the Doctor would  
prescribe for such needed patients!

[Click Here for Details](#)

## **Prevention**

Try to avoid getting stung.

Keep food and drink containers tightly covered.  
(Bees love sweet things like soft drinks.)

Don't wear perfume, colognes, or hair spray when you are

outdoors.

Don't wear bright colors.  
Choose white, or neutral colors like tan.  
These don't attract bees.

Don't go barefoot.  
Look for insects in your shoes before you wear them.

Don't swat or otherwise provoke bees or yellow jackets with  
your bare hands.

Wear insect repellents especially if you are sensitive to insect  
stings.

**If an insect that stings gets in your car,  
stop the car, roll down the windows and get the insect out of  
the car.**

## Questions to Ask

**If you are stung by an insect, do you have  
any of these problems?**

- Problems breathing and/or swallowing
  - Swelling all over
  - Swollen tongue, lips or face
  - Throat that feels closed up
  - Skin that turns blue
    - Seizure
    - Wheezing

YES

Get  
Emergency  
Care



{Note: Give shot from emergency sting kit if  
there is one. Follow instructions in kit.}

NO

**Were you stung in the mouth or on the  
tongue?**

YES

Get  
Emergency  
Care



{Note: Give shot from emergency sting kit if  
there is one. Follow instructions in kit.}

NO

**Do you have any of these problems after you  
are stung by an insect?**

- Hives
- Stomach cramps

YES

Call  
Doctor



NO



**Myth:** It's OK to treat at home an **allergic response** ([see above](#)) to a bee sting.

**Reality:** Delaying professional treatment could be fatal.

**The right approach:** For symptoms such as breathing problems, tight throat or swollen tongue, call an ambulance immediately.

[Click here to see 9 other common first aid mistakes](#)

### Self- Care Tips

- Gently scrape out the stinger as soon as possible. Use a credit card or a fingernail. This applies to bees only. Yellow jackets, wasps, and hornets don't lose their stingers.
- Don't pull the stinger out with your fingers or tweezers. Don't squeeze the stinger. It contains venom. You could re-sting yourself.
- Clean the sting area with soapy water.
- Put a cold compress on the sting. Put ice in a cloth, plastic bag, or plastic wrap. Don't put ice directly on the skin. Hold the cold compress on the site for 15-20 minutes.
- Keep the sting area lower than the level of the heart.
- Take an over-the-counter medicine for the pain.

*Tylenol, Acetaminophen, etc.*

- Take an over-the-counter antihistamine, such as Benadryl, for the itching and swelling unless you have to avoid this medicine for medical reasons. Look on the label for how much to take.

***Another Home Remedy***  
*is to apply a wet salt pack and allow it to dry.*  
*The salt will draw the pain away quickly.*

**\*Reader's Contribution:**

"I am 54 and the mother of two grown children. I also grew up on a bee farm, following my grandfather and dad, and later my husband, around the bee yard, working right along with them. I learned of a stinger remedy, oddly enough through an old Ann Landers column many years ago. I promise you it works much better than (eeoh) tobacco spit, msg, baking soda or others.

**First: DO NOT REMOVE BEE STINGERS WITH TWEEZERS!!!** The stinger is made like a syringe and the poison is in a little sac at the end of the stinger. If squeezed, the poison is automatically injected into the already abused victim. Instead, scrape the stinger away, being careful not to squeeze the sac.

**Next:** Always keep a supply of fresh onion on hand. A fresh cut onion quickly applied to the stung area will prevent swelling and redness, and will stop the pain, usually within fifteen minutes. I promise this works.

**True Story:**

At the age of five my daughter was stung in the face no less than five times by yellow jackets (nasty little buggars that are far worse than honeybees or wasps). I put slices of onion all over her face (except the eye which had a sting and I really felt onion juice in the eye was just more than she could handle). Within fifteen minutes, her face was normal, except for the one eye, which was swollen and red, but not life threaten like five stings which could have swollen her little throat.

**Question:** I know this works from my daughter's experience, and my own with various other insect stings. BUT . . .

I don't know how it would work with someone who is allergic to bee stings. In a state of emergency, if there was an onion present, and no doctor or suitable medicine, I would certainly try it (while dialing 911 or driving to the doctor, of course). That's how much faith I have in the remarkable ONION."

Good luck.

G. Lee

**"BEE ALERT"**

**The stinging insects play a vital part in our environment and economy. When we confuse them with our bright colors, our sweet scents, our sources of nourishment, they are attracted to our surroundings and to us. When we threaten them, they aggressively protect themselves and their hives. They are very unlikely to sting until they perceive a threat. Our best protection is not to poison or bait, but to respect their habits and, give them the wide berth that they deserve, then stings become unlikely.**

## • Spiders

The ultimate in "crawly"!

Recognized by the eight legs attached to the cephalothorax,  
spiders are very useful  
and  
**should not be killed.**

They eat only insects and other small pests and deserve a better  
reputation than they have.

While all spiders kill their prey by injecting poison, only two spiders  
have the ability to actually harm most people.

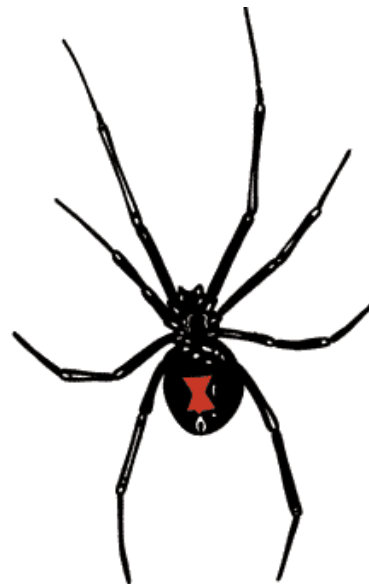
Almost all spiders are capable of producing venomous bites.  
However, there are very few species of spiders in the United States that  
produce harmful bites.

The U.S. Public Health Service reports that poisonous bites are a very minor cause of death in the United States. Annually, venomous animals produce death as follows: bees, 12; wasps and other hymenoptera, 10; snakes, 14; spiders, six; and scorpions, one.

The two most common, poisonous spiders; the brown recluse and the  
black widow are of most concern and will be discussed in detail.

Two other species, *Chirocanthium inclusum* (a common running spider)  
and *Argiope aurantia* (the black and yellow garden spider), have  
occasionally been reported as inflicting serious bites in humans.  
None of these bites produced death or prolonged illness.

## The Black Widow



Its body is about one-half inch long (smaller than a dime), and it has long legs.

The black widow spider is shiny and black with a red-orange or yellow mark in the shape of an hourglass on its stomach.

[Click here for a real photo of a Black Widow Spider](#)

Black widow spiders and their relatives can be found almost anywhere in the Western hemisphere of the world.

The black widow's range in North America is from Massachusetts to Florida and west to California, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. Although they can be found in almost every state (and some portions of Canada), this spider is most common in the Southern locales of the United States.

They can be found in damp and dark places.

Their favorite places are wood piles, tree stumps, trash piles, storage sheds, fruit and vegetable gardens, in stone walls, and under rocks. If they come inside, they will go to dark places like corners of closets, garages, or behind furniture.

They are shy by nature and bite only when trapped, sat on, or accidentally touched.

### **What a Black Widow Spider Bite Looks and Feels Like**

A person who gets bitten by a black widow spider might not know it right away, since the bite can sometimes feel like a little pinprick and may go unnoticed.

After 30 to 40 minutes, though, the area of the bite will swell and hurt a lot.

### **Symptoms**

The symptoms, which generally occur about two hours after you get bit can include: abdominal pain similar to appendicitis as well as pain to muscles or the soles of the feet.

Other symptoms include alternating salivation and dry-mouth, paralysis of the diaphragm, profuse sweating and swollen eyelids.

There is no first aid treatment available for spider bites. It may take several days to recover, but recovery usually occurs without serious complications.

**Seek Medical Attention!**



## What You Should Do

If you ever think that you've been bitten by a black widow spider, tell someone immediately.

Black widow spider bites rarely kill people, but it's important to get medical attention as soon as you can because they can make you extremely sick.

Wash the bite well with soap and water.

Then apply an ice pack to the bite to slow down the spread of the spider's venom.

Try to elevate the area and keep it still to help prevent the spread of venom.

If it's possible, catch and bring the spider to the doctor's office with you. Even though it's usually easy to identify black widows, you'll want to make sure that's the kind of spider that bit you.

The spider can be killed first before you bring it with you; just be sure not to squish it so much that no one can tell what it is.

## The Brown Recluse



The Brown Recluse is another spider that is poisonous that you must be on the lookout for.

It has long, skinny legs and is about one-half inch long overall. Its entire body is brown, except for a dark mark in the shape of a violin on its head. Its poisonous relatives may be gray, orange, reddish-brown, or pale brown.

Brown recluse spiders are most commonly found in Midwestern and Southern states of the U.S. Many cases of bites are reported from Texas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. The edge of its range just reaches the tip of western Virginia, but it occurs rarely in this state.

The spider commonly lives in basements and garages of houses and often hides behind boards and boxes. They usually hang out in dark places.

When they are outside, they like to spend time in piles of rocks, wood, or leaves. If they come inside, brown recluse spiders will go to dark closets, attics, or basements. They are non-aggressive and bite only when disturbed.

Bites often occur when the spiders hide in towels or old clothes left in those areas.

### **What a Brown Recluse Spider Bite Looks and Feels Like**

A person who gets bitten by a brown recluse spider may not notice anything at first or only feel a little sting at first. After about four to eight hours, the sting will start to hurt a little more. It might look like a bruise or might form a blister surrounded by a bluish-purple area that turns black or brown and becomes crusty after a few days.

### **Symptoms**

If you get bit by a brown recluse spider you may not notice anything at first or only feel a little sting.

The symptoms generally begin showing up after four to eight hours and the area where you were stung will start to hurt a little more.

It might even look like a bruise or a blister, surrounded by a "bruise" may begin to form.

### **What You Should Do**

If you ever think that you've been bitten by a brown recluse spider, tell somebody immediately.

Brown recluse spider bites rarely kill people, but it's important to get medical attention as soon as you can because they can make you pretty sick.

Wash the bite well with soap and water.

You can also apply ice to the area, elevate it, and keep it still. If it's possible catch and bring the spider to the doctor's office with you

- this is important because it can sometimes be hard to diagnose a spider bite correctly.

The spider can be killed first before you bring it with you; just be sure not to squish it so much that no one can tell what it is.

# Chiggers



Chiggers are tiny and red  
*(most can only be seen with a magnifying glass),*  
and they are a type of mite. Mites aren't insects - they are arachnids and part of the same family as spiders, scorpions, and ticks.

As for chiggers, sometimes simply called "red bugs," the sad truth of the matter is that you usually become aware of their presence after the fact.

They can bring on miserable itching after piercing the skin, and the virtually invisible insects have a distinct preference for the more private (and sensitive) parts of the body.

*Contrary to popular belief, chiggers do not burrow into the skin, but pierce the skin,*

Chiggers are found all over the place, including in grassy fields, along lakes and streams, and in forests. There are adult chiggers and baby chiggers (called larvae), but only the baby chiggers bother people and animals.

Chiggers have tiny claws that allow them to attach tightly onto people and animals. Once attached, they are able to pierce the skin and inject their saliva, which contains digestive juices that liquify skin cells. The chigger then slurps up the liquefied skin cells. To the chigger, this is a tasty meal! Having a chigger do this is very irritating to your skin. After a few days, the chigger will be done feeding and fall off a person's skin, leaving behind a red welt where it had once been.

## **What a Chigger Bite Looks and Feels Like**

If a person gets bitten by a chigger, the bite will be very itchy. A chigger bite will cause a tiny red bump, which will get bigger and itchier as time goes on.

## **What You Should Do**

If you think you've been bitten by a chigger, wash the bite with soap and water. Put on some calamine lotion or cool compresses to help with the itching, or use an anti-itch cream or medicine.

To help with the sting or itching from a bite.

Try

[Sting Eze](#), [Afterbite](#), [Lanacane](#), [Campho-phenique](#)  
or something similar to these.

Try not to scratch the bites too much, because this can make the bites become infected.

### **How to Avoid Getting Bitten**

The best way to avoid getting bitten by a chigger is to wear an insect repellent.

Insect repellent containing "deet" (diethyltoluamide) is effective in reducing attractiveness of your body for chigger feeding. For maximum effectiveness, repellents should be applied to shoes, socks, pant cuffs, ankles and legs, and around the waist. To relieve itching of chigger bites, over-the-counter lotions and ointments may be helpful. The "painting" of bites with clear nail polish to destroy the chigger is probably not effective. By the time the bite itches, the chigger has already fed and dropped off.

When it's possible, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants outside, especially if you'll be hiking or playing in fields.

Once you come in from being in an outdoor area that may have chiggers, take a hot shower and use plenty of soap. Also, be sure to wash your clothes in hot water to kill any chiggers that might be living there.

You can check out whether an area is infested with chiggers by using a simple technique. Six-inch squares of black paper placed vertically in the grass will become covered with chiggers if they are present.

Because several hours elapse before chiggers settle down to bite, bathing soon after exposure to chigger-infested areas may wash chiggers off your body and prevent feeding.

Clothing also should be washed to prevent reinfestation.

The most suitable breeding areas of chigger mites are among weeds and thick vegetation are where there is an abundance of moisture and shade.

Outdoor areas where chiggers are known to be a problem can be sprayed with an appropriate insecticide labeled for chigger control. Sprays should be made on grass, ground litter and soil, and shrubbery

when chiggers start to become a problem in June and July. Be sure to follow label directions of any repellents or insecticides that are used.

*The tiny larval chigger mites do not present a real medical health concern, but they can make enjoyable outdoor outings into an unpleasant experience that lasts several weeks. Many people have found that chigger bites are the most irritating and long-lasting bites by summer arthropod pests.*

### • Ticks



**Ticks are no bigger than the size of a pinhead, and therefore, very difficult to spot.**

Besides just being yucky, certain species of tick carry Lyme disease. When outdoors, prevention is the best measure: wear hats, cover exposed areas of skin with long clothes; use a repellent, such as those used on the skin containing DEET are considered to be the most effective in repelling ticks. Permethrin repellents/insecticides are designed to be applied directly to clothing, tents, sleeping bags, and any surface other than skin. It actually kills ticks and mosquitoes on contact, lasts up to 14 days and won't wash off in water.

**Avoid walking through tall grass or brush.**

**Ticks crawl, they do not fly or jump.**

**They crawl to the top of grass or another upright object and wait for you to brush up against it and then lock on for a ride. Walking in the middle of the trail will help you avoid these hitchhikers.**

**If you are going to wander in grassy areas, be sure to wear long pants. If you must wear shorts, hiking boots, socks and insect repellents are the only way to go.**

**Perform routine inspections to check for ticks.**

**If you find one, remove promptly.**

To avoid exposure to ticks, stay on the trails and avoid grassy, brushy areas.

Wear light colored clothing so ticks can be seen. Wear long sleeve shirts and tuck shirts into pants and pant legs into socks. Wear a hat. Do not wear shorts on the trails.

Check yourself for ticks or have someone else check for you.

These little creepy crawlies generally wander around for two hours before they figure out where they want to bite you, so if you check yourself over every hour or so, you might be able to get rid of it, before it gets you.

For some reason, ticks tend to wander upward, so be sure to check your hair and other warm places that they might be hiding.

Finding and removing a tick early (within 36 hours) is key to the prevention of Lyme disease.

Of the 840 known tick species, 100 of them transmit infections through their saliva. To prevent further saliva being released, once they bite, do not twist or squeeze. Grip as close as possible to the head and slowly pull it away from the skin.

Tick Pliers or tweezers make it easier to grip and extract the tick without squeezing or cutting the tick's body.

As a last resort, if you are having trouble, and to make the tick uncomfortable use a heated paper clip, alcohol, acetone, oil, or swab a pesticide such as permethrin directly to the upper and lower surfaces of the tick. This will cause it to relax, making it easier to remove.

Wash with soap and water and apply an antiseptic. Preserve the tick in a vial or polybag for analysis (alive) in case disease symptoms appear.

### **Do not use Vaseline.**

It will kill the tick and cause more harm.

Also

### **do not squeeze the body of the tick,**

it can cause all the infected material of the tick to enter into your skin.

Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water and use a disinfectant. You should have any tick bite checked by a doctor, but you should definitely have a doctor check out the bite if a rash of more than one inch wide appears at the site of the bite. This is a sign of Lyme disease. If you have flu-like symptoms up to a month after being bitten by a tick, call your doctor, you could have ehrlichiosis, another serious, potentially fatal, tick-borne disease that can be treated with antibiotics.

Don't forget to check your pets for ticks also.

You can get a Lyme disease vaccine for your dogs, but they have not yet developed one for cats.

Be sure to use a flea and tick control medication or a flea and tick collar also.

An item we picked up at Wal-Mart that works GREAT for us.

TICK REMOVER

APPROX \$3.25



[Click for enlarged image](#)

The simple, gentle action of the patented design insures the complete removal of Ticks for both people and animals.

\* The spring loaded claw securely holds the Tick and a gentle turning action will easily and safely remove it.

\* Ends messy dangerous tick removal

**Deer ticks** are the pinhead-sized transmitters of Lyme disease, in all states except Alaska and Hawaii. This disease causes fever, flu-like symptoms, a target-shaped rash where it bit, and soreness and swelling, particularly in the joints.

**Lone Star ticks** transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever and is found in all parts of the US. This disease causes headache, fever, severe muscle ache and a rash on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet that spreads to other parts of the body.

For more information on Lyme disease visit the [American Lyme Disease Foundation Website](#).

And last, but certainly not least,  
before you set up that tent,  
be sure to check the ground where you're going to put it.

Ants nest in the ground, and if you put your tent on top of their hill, they're going to come on in and join you in yours until you move it so they can get to theirs.

## Fire Ants

Fire ants fall into a class all by themselves, and across an increasingly wide area of the warmer parts of the country they have become a fact of life.

Never pitch a tent or set up camp where their mounds are visible, and in areas where they are really prevalent, exercise great caution.

Small children, in particular, can get into an ant mound and be bitten many times in seconds.

Fire ants are so called because their venom, injected by a stinger like a wasp's, creates a burning sensation. They are also active and aggressive, swarming over anyone or anything that disturbs their nest, be it wild animals, domestic animals, pets or people. An encounter with a fire ant nest can leave a lasting memory of burning pain, followed by tiny, itching pustules.

Because of this, and occasional stories of animals or people

killed by multiple stings, people fear fire ants. In some areas infested with certain species of fire ants, playgrounds, parks, and picnic areas lie abandoned, unused because of the presence of fire ants. In campsites of state and national parks in fire ant infested areas, it is often difficult to put up or take down a tent without being stung by angry fire ants.

The red fire ant is now found throughout most of the southeastern United States and west into Texas.

The black fire ant is very similar to the red imported fire ant. It is currently limited to a small area of northern Mississippi and Alabama.

Dealing with devilish insects and trouble-making creatures is a fact of camping life.

Awareness is your finest ally and anticipating problems will help you avoid most of them, as well as leaving you prepared to deal with them when they do occur.

If you are not sure what is causing bites, or need information on biting pests found in your area, [visit here.](#)

If you are concerned about the bite or possible infection, always contact your physician.

**There is one more thing  
that can bring discomfort to your camping experience . . .**

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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## Camping Terminology

**A B C D E F G H I J K L**  
**M N O P Q R S T U V W**  
**X Y and Z**

Also see

[Towing glossary](#) [Glossary for knots](#)  
[Terminology for Materials](#)  
*associated with sleeping bags, tents, etc.*

**3-Season tent** A tent recommended for use in summer, spring and fall.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

**4-Season tent** A tent designed to handle any weather conditions, including harsh winter weather.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)



**Agonic Line** a line of zero compass declination, along which the compass needle "points" to both true and magnetic north.

**A-frame** A basic tent shape, the cross section of which resembles an "A".

Simple, light, and often inexpensive, A-frame designs require staking. Their slanting walls limit elbow- and headroom. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

**Altimeter** An instrument that measures elevation by using barometric (air) pressure.

**Anorak** A pullover jacket. The anorak is basically a waterproof jacket with a hood. There are many styles of anoraks with various features.

Anoraks are practical because there is no zipper running top to bottom that can fail or let your

[Camping Terminology](#)[Terms](#)[Contact Us](#)

body warmth escape when moving.

Anoraks have a chest length zipper or snaps. They conserve heat better than a full-zip parka.

**Arkansas stone** a medium-hard mineral stone used for putting a fine edge on knives.

**Arroyo** The channel of an ephemeral or intermittent stream in the semiarid Southwest, usually with a flat-floor and vertical banks of unconsolidated material two feet or more high. Sometimes called a wady.

**Azimuth** Same as *bearing*. Refers to the degree of bearing from your current position to a landmark or destination. Reversing the bearing would be known as a back azimuth or back bearing.

commonly used to indicate a directional bearing in degrees or mils. Technically, "azimuth" relates direction to one (or a fraction of one) of the 360 degrees of the compass rose. A bearing (often used synonymously with azimuth) relates direction to the north or south cardinal point. Example: an azimuth of 330 degrees equals a bearing of N 30° W. An azimuth of 160° equals a

bearing of S 20° E. etc.

## B

**Backcountry** The area of a national park or other park that is away from the roads and general tourist areas. The backcountry is wilderness and the animals encountered there are wild and should be treated as such. You are on your own in the backcountry and should take all precautions necessary for survival.

**Back tack** A stitch sewn over a stitch to reinforce highly stressed areas where two pieces of fabric must be joined. Good quality tents use back-tack stitching.

**Baffle** fabric panels sewn to the inner and outer shell of a sleeping bag. Baffles keep the insulation in place. Down bags must be baffled. Most synthetic bags feature quilted

insulation.

**Baffle construction** A design that keeps the filling in a sleeping bag or outerwear garment from shifting back and forth and causing cold spots. Baffles, or sewn box cavities, can vary in size, shape, and volume within the same garment or bag.

**Bank(ing) a fire** To build a wall around a fire (*or where fire is to be*) out of rocks or stones, or to build the fire next to a rock or dirt wall such that it blocks the wind.

If the coals from the fire are protected well enough, there usually will be enough heat in them to easily start a fresh fire in the morning.

Ever notice that many campgrounds have fire rings at the campsites? These rings serve several purposes: they contain the ashes, they provide a cooking surface, and they block the wind.

**Bannock** the traditional trail bread. Usually made in a skillet by a combination of frying and reflective baking.

**Baseplate** The see-through plate of an orienting compass onto which the compass housing is mounted.

**Bathtub floor** (*also WRAP-UP FLOOR*) In tents, a floor that curves upward at its perimeter and is joined to the canopy. Preferred design where most tent seams are above ground level, to lessen chance for seam leaks in heavy rain -- requires a small step-over (2-3" high) into tent. Almost universal on higher quality Family and most popular Trail tent models. Tents will still require initial and regular seam sealing (*treatments sold separately*) in most cases, whatever the style or

brand of fabric shelter.

**Bean boots** slang for "Maine hunting shoe," the leather top/rubber bottom boots invented by Leon Bean.

**Bear bag** In bear country, campers must take measures to safeguard their food and cooking utensils. Food items are placed in a strong, waterproof bag (the bear bag), tied to a rope and suspended out of reach.

**Bearing** The direction of travel from your current position to a landmark or destination,

expressed in degrees from 1 to 360. Also called an [Azimuth](#).

**Bench mark** A permanent object that is either natural or man-made with a known elevation that can be used as a reference point when navigating.

**Billy** A small cooking pot with a handle on top, used for cooking food for one to three people.

**billy can** a straight-sided cooking pot with a wire bail.

**Bivouac** The site where a tent is set up; also a forced camp usually made for one night when bad weather stops progress.

technically a temporary encampment. Modern usage connotes an emergency or bush camp - made where no other camp has stood.

**Bivy sack** A small one-man tent or bag of sleeping bag proportions often used for emergency shelter.

**Blaze** A sign, painted symbol on a tree or a rock cairn used to mark a trail.

**Blousing bands** elastic bands used by the military to secure pant leg bottoms around boots. Blousing bands are useful for sealing trouser legs against mosquitoes and black flies.

**Breathable** refers to the porosity of fabrics. Breathable materials are not waterproof.

**Brunton** A small pocket compass with sights and a reflector attached, used in geological surveys.

**Bug jacket** a fabric mesh jacket that's impregnated with insect repellent.

**Bushwhacking** Off-trail travel through brush where no cleared path exists and hikers have to force their way through the branches.



**Cache** A placement of food and/or supplies along or near a trail or route of travel for future use.

**cagoule** a waterproof, ankle length (over-the-head) parka used by mountaineers for bivouacking. Cagoules have well tailored hoods and drawstring hems. The wearer pulls his legs

inside, draws the hem tight, and "outlasts" the elements.

Also known as Fisherman's shirt

**Cairn** A small pile of stones used as a trail marker. See also [Monument](#) and [Duck](#).

**Canopy** The inner wall of a double-walled tent. The canopy is breathable; the outer wall, or fly, is waterproof.

**Cap-fly** A three-quarter length tent fly. Tents with cap flies are not as weatherproof as are those with full-length flies.

**Catenary cut** the natural curve formed by a rope that's tightly strung between two trees. A tent which has a catenary cut rigs tighter (less sidewall sag) than one without catenary cut. Catenary cut is a feature of the best tents.

**Cardinal points** The four main points of direction on a compass--North/360 degrees; East/90 degrees; South/180 degrees; and West/270 degrees.

**Chaparral** Brushy areas where plants such as manzanita, cliffrose, scruboak, and ceanothus are the dominant plants.

**Charcoal Chimney** The charcoal chimney is an old-fashioned gadget that allows you to light charcoal without the use of fluid. It's a metal cylinder about 10 inches in diameter and 14 inches high. There's a handle (it gets hot!) and with a low shelf (*just above the holes*) for charcoal.

You stuff a few sheets of newspaper into the bottom and light them through the holes. They in turn light the charcoal. It only takes a few more minutes than using fluid, but you get a pile of perfectly evenly glowing briquettes.

At about the same prices as a couple bottles of starter fluid, this baby will pay for itself in half a summer. But the best part is that you'll never have to run to the store for fluid again!

**Cirque** The steep walled bowl carved by glacial action at the head of a side canyon.

**Cliff** A high, steep face of rock; a precipice.



**Coleman®** One of the leading suppliers of Camping Supplies and accessories

**Compression stuff sack** A stuff sack with cinch straps that compress the sleeping bag or pad inside so it's small enough to carry easily inside an internal frame pack and minimizes the overall volume within the pack.

**Conduction** The loss of body heat through direct contact with a cold surface, damp clothing, cold water, etc.

**Contour** A line (*thin brown lines*) connecting points of equal value on a map or diagram, most commonly points of equal elevation on a map. When hiking, especially when bushwhacking, following the natural contours of a ridge or slope makes the climb much easier, although often

much longer.

**Convection** Loss of body heat due to wind or other conditions that circulate cold air in exchange for the warm air your body has heated. The body will continuously attempt to warm the skin that is cooled by the cold air, causing you to lose your body heat and become hypothermic.

**Cordura®** A high-tenacity, abrasion and tear resistant textured yarn used for backpacks and tough duffel bags.

**Corduroy** A road, trail or bridge formed by logs laid transversely, side by side, to facilitate crossing swampy areas.

**Cord-lock** A spring-loaded nylon clamp used to secure the drawstring closures of stuff sacks.

**Couloir** A steep, relatively narrow groove in a rock wall. Typically, couloirs are wider than "cracks" and smaller than "gullies," and are important as routes up the mountainside.

**Crampons** A set of metal spikes which are strapped to the boots to provide secure footing on steep ice or consolidated snow.

**crash out** to bushwack out of a forested area, to a trail, road or meadow.



**Crookies®** brand name of a very popular elastic security strap for eye glasses.

**Cruiser compass** a needle compass which has the numbers on the dial reversed (running counterclockwise rather than clockwise) to permit reading bearings in the same plane as the observer's eye. Cruiser compasses are still used by some professionals, but there are better choices for campers. The outdated design of these instruments dates to the 19th century.

## D

**Daypack** Small backpack that holds enough gear for a one-day outing.

**Deadman** A log or rock buried in the ground to provide a solid point for anchoring a tent in ground too soft for stakes.

**Declination** The difference in degrees between magnetic north (the direction the magnetic needle on a compass points) and true or geographic north (the direction maps are printed towards).

**Deep-lugged sole** A boot sole featuring deep ridges and grooves for maximum traction.

**DEET** diethyl-meta-toluamide, the active ingredient in most insect repellents.

**Denier** (den-year)- A weight measurement used to refer to the fineness of a yarn or thread used in some backpacking and camping equipment. The lower the denier, the more thin the thread. The higher the denier the more durable the fabric will be.

**Diamond stone** a type of man-made sharpening stone which contains powdered diamonds. Diamond stones are lubricated with water (not cutting oil). They remove metal much faster than

traditional oilstones.

**differential cut** the inner shell of a sleeping bag is cut smaller than the outer shell, to produce a Thermos bottle effect. The merits of this construction are still being argued by equipment freaks.

**dining fly** an overhead tarp (fly) used for protection from rain. Usually erected just before mealtimes, hence the descriptive name

**Dome** A tent shape where the poles create a dome by curving over each other.

**Double blaze** Two painted blazes or markings on a tree that announce a change in direction or junction along a trail.

**Double-wall construction** A style of tent architecture utilizing two walls--an inner wall, or canopy, made of breathable nylon, and an outer waterproof wall or fly.

**double-wall tent** [see above](#)

**Down** The soft, fluffy underlayer of waterfowl plumage used as insulation in some sleeping bags and coats.

**Draft tube** The insulated flap that covers the length of a sleeping bag zipper. Without a great draft tube, cold air would be sucked in and warm air forced out every time you moved.

a down-filled tube that runs the length of a sleeping bag zipper - prevents cold air from filtering through the zipper teeth.

**Dropped-point knife** The favored style for hunting knives - the point is centered (similar to a spear-point) on the blade. Dropped-point knives are ideal for skinning game animals but are not the most suitable style for camp knives.

**Duck** Two or three small rocks piled one on top of the other to be used as a trail marker." See

also [Cairn](#) and [Monument](#).

**Duluth pack** a voluminous envelope style (usually, canvas) pack popular with canoeists.

**Dutch Oven** A heavy metal pot with a cover used around camps to bake and prepare other delicious meals. There is an art to good Dutch Oven cooking and some spend their lives perfecting their tasty dishes. Often a complete meal can be prepared in one Dutch Oven.

**DWR** Acronym for Durable Water-Repellent finish, a treatment found on outerwear that forces water to bead much as wax does for a car.

## E

**Embers** - the best thing to cook on if using a wood fire. When the flames have died down and the part-burnt wood glows orange or white, it is the most efficient heat to cook on.

**Encapsulation technology** A special durable water-repellent finish (DWR) that wraps around each fabric fiber, as opposed to going on like a continuous coat of paint. Provides excellent water-repellency, doesn't compromise breathability, is abrasion-proof, adds tear strength, and makes garments feel soft and supple. Used in some down and Polarguard 3D-insulated clothes.

**Ensolite** A soft rubber material that makes wonderfully light yet, for the most part, comfortable sleeping mats for use under sleeping bags while backpacking or camping.

**Escarpment** The steep face frequently presented by the abrupt termination of stratified rocks.

See also [Scarp](#).

**EVA** (ethyl-vinyl-acetate) Strongest, most resilient, and most expensive of the closed-cell foams. EVA makes an excellent trail mattress.

**External frame pack** A backpack supported by a rigid frame on the outside of the pack.

## F

**Face** The side of a cliff, escarpment, or other mostly vertical rock structure. The side of a geological structure, as in west facing slope.

**Fanny pack** A small zippered nylon pack that's attached to a waist-belt.

**Ferrule** the metal sleeve that's attached to the pole sections of fiberglass tent poles. Ferrules form a joint between pole sections.

**filling power** (*of down*) Same as "loft". It's the thickness of a sleeping bag lying flat and fluffed. Generally speaking, the greater the "loft" of a sleeping bag, the warmer it will be.

**Fisherman's shirt** (see cagoule). Same as a cagoule only calf-length and without drawstring hem.

**Flash Flood** A sudden flood of water resulting from a cloudburst.

[MORE ON FLASH FLOODS](#)

[Click Here](#)

**flat-fell seam** overlapping construction; the seam goes through four layers of material.

**FLY** (*also* [RAIN FLY](#), *FLY SHEET*, *TOP FLY*, *TENT ROOF*):

**Floating dial compass:** the compass needle is part of the numbered compass dial, which rotates as a unit. This allows the instrument to be read in the same plane as the eye of the user. Some styles are very accurate.

**Floor area** The amount of usable floor space in a tent, measured in square feet.

**foam pad** a sleeping mattress made of either open-cell or closed-cell foam.

**Foot** The rounded end of a sleeping bag, also called a footbox.

**Footprint** The shape and square footage of a tent floor.

**frame pack** a pack with an exterior aluminum or fiber framework.

**FREE STANDING FRAME** (*also* *Freestanding tent* or *SELF-SUPPORTING*):

A tent that does not require stakes or guy lines to stand erect.

Tent feature where no additional ropes or stakes are needed for basic shelter set-up (though I advise you use optional [Guy-Outs](#) for wind changes). Typically a 2 or 3 pole Dome using fabric sleeves & clips to attach the frame segments to the main tent, or an Umbrella style with spider hub that centers pole hollows at the tent peak - either mode using a top [Rain Fly](#) as waterproof roof provision.

*[Most canvas tents lacking a dedicated internal frame set still require stakes & ropes for support]*

**Frost liner** A detachable inner "roof" for a tent that absorbs moisture which might condense, freeze, and drop on sleeping occupants. Frost liners are made from cotton or cotton polyester fabric and are needed only in below freezing conditions.

**Fuel** 1. larger wood that keeps the fire going

2. [gas for a stove](#) or engine

**Fuel bottle** traditionally refers to "Sigg" aluminum bottles, which are used for the storage of gasoline and kerosene.



**Gaiter** A water-repellent, internal sleeve that can be tightened around boot and lower leg to keep out snow.

or

**gators** nylon anklets (usually with side zippers) used by skiers and mountaineers. Gators prevent snow from getting in your boot tops, and they add extra warmth.

**Gauntlet** A glove extending beyond the wrist for added warmth and protection.

**Geodesic dome** dome-shaped tent with a strong faceted framework of tubular aluminum. Geodesic domes are the Cadillac of domes!

**Gear loft** An overhead shelf in a tent. Keeps small gear overhead, providing more floor space for bags.

**Giardia** A bacteria that contaminates water in the backcountry and can cause severe stomach cramps and other symptoms.

More properly known as giardiasis, an infection of the lower intestines caused by ingesting the amoebic cyst, *Giardia lamblia*, in untreated water.

All water should be treated before consumption while in the backcountry.

A tiny protozoan, *Giardia lamblia*, flourishes in streams and lakes throughout the West, making the water unsafe to drink unless boiled or treated. If you develop symptoms such as diarrhea, cramps, and bloating, consult a physician. To avoid giardiasis, carry adequate water for short hikes, and on longer trips, boil water from streams or lakes for at least three minutes before drinking or cooking with it.

*The three recommended methods for water purification are boiling, chemical treatment, and filtration.*



*Any of these methods should remove giardia, provided you use them properly  
(some contaminants, such as viruses, cannot be removed by filtration).*

*The simplest and most reliable method of purification is boiling: bring water to a full rolling  
boil for at least one full minute.  
If you use a chemical treatment, such as chlorine or iodine, be sure to use the proper amount for  
the given water conditions (such as turbidity and temperature).*

***If you develop giardia symptoms, see your physician immediately.***

**Giardiasis:** a waterborne disease carried by the protozoan "Giardia." Giardia is commonly carried by beaver. Incubation time is one to two weeks. The pathogen is very hardy.

[See text description of Giardia above.](#)

**Girth** the inside space, as measured around the sleeper's waist area.

Mummy bags have the smallest girth, and rectangular have the largest.

**GROMMET** Little round metal sewn-in rings found on corners of so-called post & grommet type tents - usually 2 or more per pole point/corner, on better tent models. These make for durable, fast set-ups, and easier adjustments when temps change fabric and pole lengths. Also found on generic tarps, and some custom tent footprints.

**Ground stakes** Anchors that hold a tent to the ground.

**Gusseted tongue** (bellows) A leather piece attached to both sides of the upper on a hiking boot, designed to keep out water and dirt.

**Guy lines** A length of cord used to secure or reinforce the walls and rainfly of a tent.

**GUY-OUT LOOPS** (also known as GUY-OUT RINGS, [GUY POINTS](#), STORM RINGS, STORM TIES): Extra connection points on tent, for cord/line runs to additional stakes in event of wind gusts - basic tents usually require customer purchase of separate line and stakes to make use of these rings, which I strongly suggest you employ in event of weather changes.

[Click Here for more tent use & selection tips.](#)

**Guy point** One of several points outside a tent where a line (a guy line) can be attached and then secured to a stake or other anchor in order to increase a tent's structural integrity.



**Haft** The handle of an axe

**Haversack** A bag or pouch used by hikers to carry food, usually carried at the side by a shoulder strap.

**Head gasket** A piece sewn around the hood of a sleeping bag to keep in warm air.

**Hip belt** The main support device on a backpack. Large padded belt that buckles around the waist and is fully adjustable.

*makes carrying the pack much more comfortable.*

**Hollow-ground (knife)** the edge is ground to a concave bevel which produces a thin, razor edge and a stiff spine.

**Hood closure:** the tie cord and fastener which secures the hood of a sleeping bag around the sleeper's face.

**Horn** A high pyramidal peak with steep sides formed by the intersecting walls of three or more [\*cirques\*](#).

**Housing** The rotating part of a compass that holds the damping fluid, the magnetic needle and has degrees engraved around its edge from 1 to 360. *Also known as the [\*Azimuth Ring\*](#).*

**hypothermia** A potentially lethal physical state caused by lowering of the body's core temperature, due to exposure to cold wet weather.



**I-pole tent** a tent with a single vertical pole at each end.

**Imu** A shallow pit used for cooking.

**Internal frame pack** A backpack supported by stays on the inside. The stays give the pack shape and make it more comfortable to carry than a traditional soft pack.

**Inselberg** Prominent steep-sided residual hills and mountains rising abruptly from plains. The residuals are generally bare and rocky, large and small, isolated and in hill and mountain groups, and they are surrounded by lowland surfaces of erosion that are generally true plains, as distinguished from peneplains.

**Iron Ranger** An "iron ranger" is a fee collection box used at campgrounds that do not have full time attendants. Upon entrance to the campground, you deposit your nightly fee(s) in an envelope with your name and site number and drop this in the collection box. At sometime during the day, a park ranger will make rounds of the campgrounds and collect the fees.

You will often see these in National Park and National Forest campgrounds.



**Jello-mold oven** an oven made from a large ring aluminum Jello mold

## K

**Kerf** A cut made by an ax, saw, etc.

**Kindling** Small, thin, dead wood (1" around or less) used to start a fire.

**Knife-edge** A very narrow ridge crest. In spots, the crest of a knife-edge is too angular to walk on, and travel requires scrambling over and around pinnacles, along ledges on the side of the ridge, or even straddling the ridge.

## L

**layering** wearing several thin layers of clothes, one over the other. Layering is the most efficient clothing system for cold weather.

**Lean-to** A three-sided shelter with an over-hanging roof and one open side.

**Lensatic compass** a compass which features a built-in magnifying lens for ease of reading directions. The old anny lensatic compass (no longer used) is the best example of this type of instrument. Lensatic compasses are impractical for camping (they don't have built-in protractors), slow to use, and no more accurate than modern Orienteering instruments.

**Lexan®** A material used in water bottles and other camping gear that is extremely durable and can withstand a wide range of temperatures.

**lock-back knife** a folding knife that has an integral lock which "locks" the blade in place when it is open. Some modern lock-backs are really "side-locks" or "front-locks." Lock-back knives do not have pressure springs like ordinary jack-knives, so they can be opened easily with one hand while wearing mittens.

**Loft** The height and thickness of insulation in a sleeping bag.

thickness of a sleeping bag that's laying flat and fluffed. Generally speaking, the higher the loft, the warmer the bag.

**Lumbar pad** A support on a backpack to comfort heavy loads on the lower back.

## M

**Magnetic north** The geographical region towards which all magnetic needles point. This point is approximately 1,300 miles south of true north.

**map index** a specially gridded small-scale map which lists "maps in print," how and where to get them, and their cost. A map index is available free from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Canada Map Office. See text description.

**Marquee** A large tent, often used as a dining or meeting tent.

**Massif** A compact mountain group consisting of several summits.

**Mesa** A tableland; a flat-topped mountain or other elevation bounded on at least one side by a steep cliff; a plateau terminating on one or more sides in a steep cliff. Seen in many areas of the southwest.

**Millar-Mitts** fingerless gloves used by mountaineers for technical climbing. Millar-mitts are great for fishing, canoeing and general hiking.

**Mocoa** a popular camp drink which consists of hot-chocolate mixed with coffee.

**Modified dome** A dome tent that has been designed for specific elements, such as wind or snow.

**Moleskin** brand name of soft-surfaced bandaging material used to protect blisters. The sticky side of Moleskin is placed over the unbroken blister; the cushioned surface absorbs the friction from socks and boot.

**Monsoon** In the Southwest, a seasonal outbreak of localized severe thunderstorms that deposit large quantities of rain often resulting in flash floods, especially in canyon country where there are narrow slot canyons and little vegetation to help absorb the sudden rush of water.

**Monument** A large pile of stones used to mark a trail or often found at the summit of a peak.

See also [Cairn](#) and [Duck](#)

**Mountain Parka** a generic name for full zipper thigh-length parkas. Mountain parkas usually have lots of pockets. They're traditionally constructed from 60/40 (60 percent nylon, 40 percent cotton) cloth, which is doubled for added warmth. The U.S. Army field jacket is a true mountain parka.

**Mummy bag** A close fitting, shaped, hooded sleeping bag very efficient at conserving body heat.

[\*See more detailed information on a Mummy Sleeping Bag\*](#)

*You may also want to see*  
[\*Semi-Mummy Sleeping Bag\*](#)



**Nalgene Bottle** A type of "plastic" bottle that holds up well under the harsh conditions of hiking and camping. Originally designed to store chemical reagents, the plastic resists taking on the smell of the liquid or ingredients it contains. A very popular type of water bottle, especially the wide-mouthed variety. They hold up for years.

**Narrows** See [Slot Canyon](#).

**Noggin** A small camper's mug.

**No-see-um mesh** A tent mesh so fine that it keeps out the tiny biting bugs called no-see-ums.



**Orienteering** Using a map and compass in the field to determine your route of travel.

**Orienteering compass** a compass that has a built-in protractor which allows you to determine directions from a map without orienting the map to north. This is the most practical compass style for outdoor use.

**Overlapping V-tube construction** (*sleeping bags*) a type of baffle construction in which down is secured into V-shaped tubes which overlap one another. Some very warm winter sleeping bags are built this way.



**pack basket** a basket pack that's traditionally woven from splints of black ash. This original Indian made item is still going strong in the New England area and is available from L. L. Bean. Pack-baskets are ideal for berry picking, picnicking, canoe trips, and auto camping. They will protect all your breakables. Compared to fabric packs, they are quite inexpensive.

**Packed size** The dimensions of a collapsed tent and its contents, in square inches.

**Parka** a thigh-length shell garment with integral hood. Parkas may be lined or filled with down, polyester or other insulation for use in cold weather.

**Pile** a luxuriously soft fabric made from polyester. Pile absorbs little water and it dries quickly if it gets wet. Pile has almost replaced wool as the material for cold weather camping.

**Plateau** A relatively elevated area of comparatively flat land which is commonly limited on at least one side by an abrupt descent to lower land. Sometimes called a table or tableland. *See also*

[\*Mesa.\*](#)

**PolarGuard® 3D** A hollow-fiber, highly durable, polyester insulation used in sleeping bags and clothing that has a high warmth-to-weight ratio.

**Pole sleeves** Fabric tunnels on the outside of a tent into which the tent poles are inserted.

**Poly-bottle** short for polyethylene bottle.

**poncho** a rectangular, hooded rain garment. Ponchos provide good ventilation and can be worn over a hiking pack. They do not supply reliable protection from rain.

**Pothole** A hole generally deeper than wide, worn into the solid rock at falls and strong rapids by sand, gravel, and stones being spun around by the force of the current. In desert country a pothole often collects water during rains and can contain a variety of small freshwater creatures.

After rain they can be an important water source for the local wild animals. Care should be taken around potholes to not contaminate or unnecessarily waste the precious water. We try not to walk through them even when they are dry, knowing that the little critters are encapsulated in the

dust, just waiting for the next rain storm. *See also [Tank](#) and [Water Pocket](#)*

**Primaloft®** A microfibrus polyester insulation so close to down in terms of structure, warmth, and feel that it's also known as patented sythetic down. Primaloft is lightweight, durable, very compressible, and unlike down, highly water repellent.

**prime** as in "priming" a gasoline or kerosene stove. Stoves are usually primed by filling an integral "spirit cup" with gasoline or alcohol, then setting the fuel aflame.

**Over-prime** Stoves can be "over-primed." If too much gasoline is forced into the spirit-cup, the unit may ignite into a ball of uncontrollable flame.

**Priming** Allowing fuel to collect in the burner of a white-gas stove before ignition.

**Prismatic compass** A compass with a mirror designed to allow a user to see both distant objects being sighted and the compass face at the same time.

**Puncheon** A log bridge built over fragile terrain that is wet.

**Punkies** Also called no-see-ums; a tiny insect called a midge, which bites severely.

**Purifier** A drinking water system that removes contaminates and eliminates viruses with a combination of specialized filters.



**Quallofil®** a synthetic material developed by Dupont for use in sleeping bags and parkas. Each filament has four longitudinal holes which trap air and add warmth. Quallofil® is one of the best synthetic insulators.

**quick-release knot** a knot which can be removed by a simple pull of the tail. The most common quick-release knot is the "bow" used for tying your shoes.

**Quilted** or **Quilt Construction** A stitching style that runs through the shell and lining of a sleeping bag or garment to keep insulation from shifting. Quilting is lighter and less expensive than it's more complex cousin, baffle construction. It is also less efficient because the stitching compresses the loft out of the fabrics and allows cold to move freely through the compressed area around the needle holes.



**Rain fly** A tent covering that aids in keeping a tent dry and windproof.

Waterproof - hopefully - top fabric layer, on most modern double-wall synthetic fabric camping

tents (*i.e. the outside part that gets the hard rain, versus the inner air-permeable ceiling that helps ventilation*). The fly takes the most wear & tear from UV, wind, tree sap, storms, so on, and needs more frequent maintenance/replacement than other parts of the tent, typically -- we suggest you buy 1 or 2 extras, in case your tent model goes out of production and parts become scarce (*you might add some extra poles while you're at it*)

See **MORE DETAIL** on [rain fly](#)

**Rating** The degree Fahrenheit to which a sleeping bag is constructed to sleep comfortably. *i.e.* -30 degrees, 0 degrees, +15 degrees.

**Reef** A sedimentary rock aggregate, large or small, composed of the remains of colonial-type organisms that lived near or below the surface of water bodies, mainly marine, and developed relatively large vertical dimensions as compared with the proportions of adjacent sedimentary rock. In canyon country a "reef" is simply a nautical term carried over into geology to describe a barrier, such as Waterpocket Fold in Capital Reef National Park in Utah.

**Reflector oven** an aluminum sheet-metal oven which bakes by means of reflected heat. Reflector ovens are hard to keep clean and they are very cumbersome. They require open flame for baking and cannot be used on stoves or over charcoal. They are very efficient if you have a nice bright fire.

**Ridge** A relatively narrow elevation which is prominent on account of the steep angle at which it rises. The narrow, elongated crest of a hill or mountain; an elongated hill; a range of hills or mountains.

**ridge-vent** the triangular window at the ridge of A-frame tents.

**Ring & Pin** On tents, a very easy-to-use corner assembly design where long pins (1 to 3 inch steel or aluminum) with metal rings attaching are permanently sewn to the exterior corners of the structure, and the pins are then inserted into the hollow ends of the tent poles. Fast, goof-proof, inexpensive, widely used, and suited to most 2-3 season general rec tent models; the higher line post & grommet corner system is main alternative, found on most 3+ season mountain grade tents.

*[Ring & pin is also used to describe the attachments that mount grommets fabric trail bags to exterior pack frames]*

**rip-stop nylon** a lightweight nylon fabric that has heavier threads sewn in at approximate one-quarter-inch intervals. Rip-stop is less likely to tear than taffeta but it has less resistance to abrasion.

Rip-stop nylon is commonly used for outdoor garments, and is distinguished by a fine pattern of boxes (barely noticeable) that are designed to keep fabric from tearing. Rip-stop is very lightweight material. It is water and wind resistant.

**Rock Glacier** A glacier-like tongue of angular rock waste usually heading in cirques or other steep-walled amphitheatres and in many cases grading into true glaciers. There are many rock glaciers found along the edges of the Aquarius Plateau.

**Rucksack** A type of knapsack or backpack, usually made of canvas with two shoulder straps.



**Saddle** A low point on a ridge or crest line, generally a divide between the heads of streams flowing in opposite direction.

**Scarp** An [escarpment](#), [cliff](#), or steep slope of some extent along the margin of a [plateau](#), [mesa](#), terrace, or bench.

**Scree** Loose rock, typically fist size or smaller that accumulates at the base of a rock wall. *See [Talus](#).*

**Seam-sealer** a special glue, available at all camping shops, used to waterproof the stitching on tents and raingear.

**Seam Sealing** Coating, waterproof of the sewn seam areas on tents, backpacks, and other combined outdoor fabrics, to decrease water entry. Treatments range from inexpensive water-based dauber bottles, to heavier brush-on polyurethane coatings, to very heavy technical grade near-plastic fillers.

[See waterproofing your tent for related info](#)

**Seam tape** A waterproof tape applied over all seams on a tent or other equipment meant to be totally water repellent.

**self-supporting tent** theoretically, a tent which needs no staking. However, all self-supporting tents must be staked or they'll blow away in wind.

**semi-mummy bag** a sleeping bag with a barrel-shape and no hood. A good choice for those who feel confined by the mummy shape but want lighter weight and more warmth than that supplied by standard rectangular sleeping bags.

**sewn-through construction** [same as "quilt" construction](#).

**Shell** The outermost material in a sleeping bag or outdoor clothing, consisting of a fabric used to meet a particular demand such as abrasion resistance, water repellency or suppleness.

**Shock cord** An elastic cord running through tent poles to separation or loss of the poles, and to expedite set-up.  
*See below*

**SHOCK CORDED POLES:** This means that a bungee cord runs through each pole assembly. This keeps the pole together so you don't have to hunt for pieces. As the poles sections slip together the cord holds them together so they can be handled as a single pole.

**Side Canyon** In decreasing order of size, local usage is: canyon, fork, gulch.

**Sigg** *Fuel bottle* traditionally refers to aluminum bottles, which are used for the storage of gasoline and kerosene.

**Single-walled tent** A lightweight, single-fabric construction tent that is chemically treated for insulation and waterproofness but which may not be very breathable.

**Sixty-forty parka:** a parka made from fabric which consists of 60 percent nylon and 40 percent cotton. The term "60/40" is now generic; it defines any mountain style parka, regardless of the fabric composition. See "mountain parka."

Mountain parkas of water - repellent 60/40 cloth, polyester/cotton blends, or waterproof Gore-Tex are light-weight, windproof and "breathe-able", making them an excellent choice for use as the outer shell of your layered clothing system. In a downpour, 60/40 and polyester/cotton mountain parkas can be augmented with a lightweight, loose - fitting poncho of plastic or coated nylon, which can be worn to protect your pack as well as your body. Gore-Tex mountain parkas need no additional rainproof layer.



**shell** (*garments*) refers to unlined garments, or the interior or exterior wall of a sleeping bag.

**side-wall baffle** a [baffle](#) that is opposite the zipper on a sleeping bag; it keeps the down from shifting along the length of the bag.

**siwash** means to live off the land with a bare minimum of essentials. Modern campers do not siwash!

**Slickrock** Generally a smooth, weathered sandstone surface that becomes slippery due to the presence of sand grains. Can be dangerous to walk across.

**Slot Canyon** A deep, narrow, steep-walled canyon, most often cut through sandstone, and often with water running along its bottom. Sometimes referred to as narrows.

**Smores** Simply a great camping treat to make for kids, big and small, around a campfire at night.

**Ingredients:**

Bag of Marshmallows  
Hershey's Chocolate Bars  
Graham Crackers

Toast marshmallows over a campfire and place them on a graham cracker with a piece of chocolate. Mash a second graham cracker on top to complete the s'mores.



Enjoy!

**snow-flaps** ear-like flaps which are sewn to the perimeter of a tent floor. Snow-flaps are folded outward then piled with snow. This eliminates the need for staking the tent. Snow-flaps are an extra-cost feature of special purpose winter tents.

**Solar blankets** [see Space Blanket](#)

**Sou'wester:** the traditional rain hat of sailors and commercial fishermen. The sou'wester was developed centuries ago and it is still the best of all foul weather hats. The best sou'westers have ear flaps, chin strap, and a flannel lining.



**space filler-cut** where the inner and outer shells of a sleeping bag are cut the same size. This construction allows the inner liner and fill to better conform to the curves of your body than the Thermos bottle shape of the "differential cut." The merits/demerits of space-filler versus differential cut are still being argued by sleeping bag manufacturers.

**Space Blanket:** a Mylar-coated "blanket" used in survival kits. Space-blankets are waterproof

and are very warm for their size and weight. Every camping shop has them.

They are also called Mylar blanket, Aluminized blanket. The blanket measure 84" X 54" when spread open, they are the perfect for retaining warmth in any emergency.

Easy to store with it's compact design and light weight packaging. A must have item in your survival or emergency response kit. The blanket can serve different uses. It can deflect heat when used as a shelter from the sun. You can decrease heat inside your automobile by using the solar blanket to cover the roof and windows.

**primary use** is to reflect back your own body heat.  
It conserves 90% of body heat when wrapped around a person.

**sternum strap** a short nylon strap which connects the shoulder straps of a hiking pack. A properly adjusted sternum strap transfers some of the pack load to the chest.

**storm-flap** a panel of material which backs the zipper of a parka  
prevents "the storm" from getting in.

**stuff sack** traditionally, a nylon sack in which a sleeping bag is stored. The term now defines any nylon bag with drawstring closure.

**Swiss Army knife** originally, the issue knife of the Swiss Army. Now, generic for any "Scout-style" multi-tool pocket knife.

**Svea** brand name of the venerable Svea stove.



[See more information on Camping Stoves by clicking here . . .](#)

**Stake** [see tent stake](#)

**[Snow stakes](#)** Wide, platform-type stakes used to anchor a 4-season tent in snow.

**Stay** The backbone of aluminum or plastic material supporting an internal frame backpack.

**Stile** A structure built over a fence that allows hikers to cross over without having to deal with a gate.

**Stream** Any body of flowing water or other fluid, great or small.

**Switchback** A zigzagging trail up the side of a steep ridge, hill or mountain, which allows for a more gradual and less strenuous ascent.



**Table** See [Plateau](#).

**Talus** The loose rock of all sizes that falls from a cliff and accumulates at the base. The distinction between scree and talus is generally that talus is large enough not to move underfoot.

**Tank** Tanks are natural depressions in an impervious stratum, in which rain or snow water collects and is preserved the greater portion of the year. Also a natural or artificial pool or water hole in a wash. Seen often in the arid southwest. See also [Pothole](#) and [Water Pocket](#).

**Tarn** A small rock-rimmed lake in an ice-gouged basin on the floor of a cirque or in a glaciated valley.

**Technical Climbing** Mountain climbing requiring use of ropes and fixed belay anchors on either rock or ice. Also includes any sustained climbing where the arms are used to pull upward rather than being used solely for balance. **Topographical map** A map that identifies land features (topography), as well as roads and man-made structures.

**Tent Stake** A piece of wood, metal or aluminum pointed at one end for driving into the ground to hold a rope supporting a tent.

Why you need to stake your tent, for without the stakes your tent could quickly become a kite in the lightest of winds and destroy itself as it tumbles through the woods or across the sand dunes.



**Tinder** - small twigs, wood shavings, dry leaves or grass, dry needles, bark or dryer lint (*ultra-fine dry material*).

This should start to burn immediately with a lighted match.

**Topo Map** Sometimes referred to as a topo sheet. See below (*Topographic Map*).

**Topographic Map** A map showing the topographic features of a land surface generally by means of [contour](#) lines.

**toque** a jaunty wool stocking cap traditionally worn by the Voyageurs.

**trenching** (*also called "ditching"*) digging a trench around a tent to carry away ground water which accumulates during a heavy rain.

This form of guttering is illegal in all wilderness areas. Ground cloths and tent floors have eliminated the need to "trench" tents.

See STORMPROOFING YOUR TENT for details.

**tumpline** a head strap used to carry heavy loads. Voyageurs carried hundreds of pounds of furs

with only a tumpline. Today this feature is found only on traditional canvas duluth packs which are used for wilderness canoeing.

**twist-on-a-stick:** baking powder bread made by twisting dough on a stick and baking it over the fire.

See the recipe by clicking here . . .

**Trailhead** The point at which a trail begins. In most parks and popular areas there is a parking lot or turn out for easy access.

**Traverse** Horizontal travel across a mountainside or over a ridge. An ascending or descending traverse refers to a gradual elevation change while traveling across a much steeper slope.

**Tread** A trail's surface.

**Tumpline** A strap across the forehead and over the shoulders, used to carry loads on the back.

**Tunnel tent** A low profile tent that is long and rounded.



**Ultralight tent** A tent designed for one or two people, weighing five pounds or less and designed to carry on or in a backpack.

**UV degradation** A breaking down of material due to the sun's harsh ultraviolet rays. UV degradation can be a potential problem with tent flies exposed to the sun for extended periods.



**Vestibule** A covered area outside of or connected to a tent, usually created by an extended rain-fly or a special attachment.

Vestibules provide a place to store gear out of the weather

**Volume** The amount of space in a backpack measured in cubic inches.



**Wachita stone** a medium-hard mineral oil stone used for sharpening knives.

**Wady** See [Arroyo](#).

**Wash** The wash of a stream is the sandy, rocky, gravely, boulder-strewn part of a river bottom. In the southwest a wash is usually the dry bed of an intermittent stream often at the bottom of a canyon. Also called a dry wash.

**Waterproof** impervious to water; *especially* : covered or treated with a material (as a solution of rubber) to prevent permeation by water.

### Water-resistant vs. Waterproof

A garment that is water-resistant is "treated with a finish that is resistant but not impervious to penetration by water," while a garment that is waterproof is "covered or treated with a material to prevent permeation by water."

**water-repellent** treated with a finish that is resistant but not impervious to penetration by water

**Water-resistant** *see water-repellent* above Also note [Water-resistant vs. Waterproof](#)

**Water Pocket** A bowl in rock that has been formed by the erosional action of falling or running water. Often times a collection point for rain and run off water, and thus a potential source of

drinking water for wild animals and humans. *See also* [Tank](#) and [Pothole](#).

**White-gas** A distillate of petroleum, also called petroleum naphtha, commonly used in backpacking stoves.

**Wilderness** A tract or region uncultivated and uninhabited by human beings, essentially undisturbed by human activity, together with its naturally developed life community, generally an empty pathless area.

**Wind shirt** differs from a wind-parka in that the shirt is cut to waist length and does not have a hood. Wind pants are made of breathable fabric and are popular for winter camping.

**white-print map** a provisional map that's similar to a "blue-print." White-prints are up-to-date maps which show the location of logging and mining roads and man made structures. These maps are designed for professional use; they are not listed in standard map indexes.

**WRAP-UP FLOOR** - [see Bathtub floor](#)



## Terminology for Materials *associated with sleeping bags, tents, etc.*

**Acrylic** Generic name for soft, washable, colorfast fibers derived from polyacrylonitrile.

**Aquator** Two-layer knit of 65 percent cotton / 35 percent nylon, with the nylon on the inside for moisture transport and cotton on the outer layer for evaporation. Usually employed for hot weather underlayers.

**Bergundtal Cloth** Columbia's proprietary Taslan nylon shell fabric, combining a soft cottonlike hand and nylon's water-repellency. Often polyurethane-coated to improve weather resistance.

**BTU** A 100 percent polyester fiber from Hoechst-Celanese, distinguished by its mix of fiber cross sections. Knit or woven into thicker garments, BTU is an efficient insulator; made into a thin single-layer shirt, its moisture transport properties help cool the wearer.

**Capilene** Patagonia's treated polyester, used primarily in their underlayers. The fiber surface is treated to make it hydrophilic (water-loving) while the core remains hydrophobic (water-hating). The combination lifts water away from the skin toward outer clothing layers without soaking the fiber itself.

**Coated Nylon** Nylon fabric (usually taffeta or ripstop) coated with urethane on the inside to make it waterproof, not breathable. Can't be relied on for full water protection without sealed seams.

**Coolmax** DuPont's naturally hydrophobic polyester fiber with strong wicking action. Often used in linings and light layering garments. Fabric softeners may hurt its ability to transfer moisture.

**Cordura** An impressively abrasion-resistant brushed-nylon fabric from DuPont. Often used in luggage and backpacks. In clothing, most often used as reinforcement patches at high-wear areas like knees, shoulders, and arms. Popular Cordura blends: Cordura/Antron, Cordura Plus, Cordura/Polyester/Cotton, Cordura/Supplex, Cordura/Taslan, Spandura, WoolDura.

**DryFIT** Nike's nylon/polyester push-pull fabric.

**DryLete** Hind's nylon/polyester push-pull fabric.

**Dryline** A nylon/polyester push-pull fabric most often used to line WP/B outerwear.

**Dryloft** A Gore membrane designed to be used in sleeping bags and down outerwear. It is more breathable than Gore-Tex, but less waterproof. The products which use this membrane are typically not seam-sealed.

**DWR** Durable Water-Repellent, generally a silicone-based treatment applied to outerwear fabrics to help keep them from becoming saturated. DWR needs periodic touch-ups: Reactivate by machine drying, careful ironing, or with spray-on treatments.

**Elements** REI's version of Entrant.

**Entrant** Is an elastic waterproof breathable polyurethane coating that breathes through microscopic pores left during application. Made by Toray Industries of Japan; licensed to numerous manufacturers under various names. Entrant's trade-off between waterproofing and breathability depends on coating thickness; more coating equals more waterproofing less breathability. Popular versions include: REI's Elements and Patagonia's H2No.

**Fortrel** Polyester microfiber that adds a softer hand to other fabrics that it is blended with.

**FuzzLite** Sierra Designs' name for Polartec 200 fleece.

#### **Fuzzy Stuff**

A vapor-barrier-layer (VBL) fabric from Stephenson's Warmlite. It's a laminate of nylon tricot and polyester film, napped on the inside for a flannel-like feel. VBL garments stop all perspiration from migrating outward into other clothing layers.

#### **Gore-Tex**

This is not a fabric, but a microporous membrane, which, when laminated to an outer fabric layer, provides a waterproof barrier that allows perspiration vapor to escape. Latest versions offer better waterproofness at the expense of some breathability. Garments of "three-layer" construction look like a single fabric but are really a sandwich of Gore-Tex laminated to one of a variety of tough outer fabrics, backed by a protective tricot inner face. "Two-layer" construction mates the Gore-Tex and an outer fabric, with a separate liner. Gore-Tex is no longer used in sleeping bag construction. A new membrane called Dryloft is used instead.

**Gore-Tex LTD** It is laminated to a liner that rides next to the body. This improves moisture transfer but hampers waterproofing, so LTD is used mainly for aerobic-activity apparel.

**Gore-Tex XCR** Used in sweaters and outerwear. It is more windproof and breathable than it is waterproof. This is the membrane used in Polartec 1000 Windproof.

**Gridstop** A three-layer waterproof / breathable fabric from Patagonia. It's a sandwich of sturdy 2.5-ounce (per square yard) ripstop polyester, a microporous laminate from Gore (Gore-Tex), and protective nylon tricot inner facing.

**Gust Buster** Sierra Designs' name for Polartec series 1000 fleece with a windproof, water-repellent barrier between fleece layers. Inner layer is hydrophilic, outer layer is hydrophobic.

**Helly-Tech** Helly-Hansen's proprietary WP/B polyurethane coating. Available in three degrees of performance: Helly-Tech Lightning (reasonably waterproof, highly breathable); Helly-Tech Classic (waterproofing and breathability about equal); and Helly-Tech Pro (generally more waterproof than breathable).

**Hollofil** Single-hole Dacron polyester insulation for sleeping bags and apparel. Most often found in bargain brands. Hollofil II is a four-hole version that's slightly warmer than an equal amount of regular Hollofil, with improved stuffability.

**HP** Sierra Designs' non-porous polyurethane WP/B coating, applied to ripstop, taffeta, and Taslan fabrics. HP relies on body heat to push water molecules through the coating into the outer fabric for evaporation. Works best when the temperature inside the garment is significantly higher than that outside.

**H2No** Patagonia's version of Entrant WP/B coating, comes in increasingly less breathable and more waterproof versions called Light, Alpine, and Storm.

**Hydrofil** Nylon from Allied Fibers that's modified to become hydrophilic, so it transports moisture outward.

**Hydroseal** An elastomeric coating used by Outdoor Research. It is extremely tough and flexible (even at 40 below); ultra-waterproof (greater than 200 psi); and easily tapable. Used in OR stuff sacks.

**Lamilite** Wiggy's polyester-based high-loft synthetic fill. Its continuous fiber structure gives it a long service life compared with some synthetics made of shorter fibers.

**Lite Loft** 3M's high-loft lightweight 77.5 percent polyester / 22.5 percent olefin insulation used in sleeping bags and outerwear.

**Lifa Prolite** Helly-Hansen's polypropylene underlayer fabric. It's distinguished by a soft brushed finish that isn't as scratchy as some other polypro garments, and is more odor resistant than most polypro gear.

**Microfiber** Just what it sounds like -- an extremely fine, tightly woven fiber that offers natural breathability as well as wind and water resistance. Two widely available brands are Versatech, Pertex, and Super Microft. Other microfiber fabrics are treated with WP/B laminates or coatings.

**Microloft** New polyester fiberfill from DuPont, made up of microfine fibers thinner than a human hair. The dense structure is claimed to trap heat more efficiently than other synfills of equal thickness, and is purportedly highly water-resistant.

**Microshed** Solstice's proprietary polyurethane-based WP/B coating. Function is similar to Entrant.

**Next-To-Skin** The North Face's polyester / Lycra underwear fabric.

**Nomex** A nylon fabric that's been modified to raise its melting point and increase fire resistance. Most often used in uniforms for firefighters, racecar drivers, and pilots. Stephenson Warmlite makes sturdy (but expensive) Nomex trail jeans that won't melt when a campfire spark lands in your lap.

**Nylon** Generic term for an artificial fiber made from synthetic polyamides extracted from coal and oil.

**Polarguard / Polarguard HV** High-loft synthetic insulation of 100 percent polyester continuous-filament fibers. Polarguard is one of the original and most durable synfills, if somewhat bulky when stuffed. New HV version uses hollowed fibers and is about 25 percent more stuffable while retaining longevity.

**Polartec** Generic name for polyester fleece fabrics made by Malden Mills and used by dozens for manufacturers. Comes in several weights for layering versatility.

**Series 100** (formerly Polartec) The lightest fleece, stretchy, with a plush face and jersey back. Great base layer, with trim fit and full freedom of movement.

**Series 200** (formerly Polarlite) Midweight fleece, faced on two sides. Great general-purpose layering weight.

**Series 100S/200S** Lightweight and midweight fleeces made with extra Lycra; extra stretchy and trim-fitting.

**Series 100M/200M** Lightweight and midweight fleeces knit with superfine microfiber yarns for a soft chamois-clothlike feel.

**Series 300** (formerly Polar Plus) Fleeced on both sides of fabric; best for cold-weather use.

**Series 1000 Windproof** Three-layer sandwich of lightweight fleeces with a breathable / windproof laminate in between. Impressively windproof in use, it has a highly water-resistant surface, but it won't replace a truly waterproof outer shell.

**Olefin (polypropylene)** A paraffin-based synthetic fiber that's hydrophobic, quick-drying, colorfast, and has good heat retention. Subject to sudden meltdown in hot dryers.

**Omni-Tech** Columbia's polyurethane WP/B coating used on several of the firm's fabrics.

**Oxford Nylon** Characterized by a basket weave and commonly used in rainwear.

**Packcloth** Typically a nylon fabric of medium weave with a urethane back-coating for water-repellency.

**Polyester** Frequently blended with cotton, rayon, or other synthetics. A synthetic fiber with features that include quick-drying, high-strength, abrasion-resistance, crease resistance. It is more UV resistant than nylon.

**Polypropylene** Paraffin-based fiber that has high strength and great moisture-management properties, but also has a reputation for odor retention and high-temperature meltdown. Newer blends largely overcome these maldis.

**Propile** Helly-Hansen's fuzzy nylon pile fabric, knitted so it won't pill like typical polyester pile.

**Push-Pull** A two-part fabric of non-absorbant hydrophobic knit next to the skin and absorbent hydrophylic knit on the outside. Usually polyester inside, nylon outside.

**Quallofil** DuPont's six-channel Dacron polyester insulation with a soft, downlike feel. Now being supplanted by newer fills.

**Rayon** Generic term for synthetic fibers from trees, cotton, and woody plants. Has a shiny appearance, drapes well, and feels silky. Too absorbent for good moisture management.

**Retro Pile** Patagonia's proprietary pile, 1/4 inch thick. This is thicker and warmer than Polartec 300. This is really Patagonia's old Baby Retro fabric. They discontinued the old, 1/2 inch thick Retro pile.

**Seal Coat** An elastomeric waterproof coating used by Black Diamond. It is completely waterproof and does not crack or peel. Used on many of their products. Originally developed for Patagonia who still uses it on their Skanorak parka.

**Sixty-Forty** The 60 percent cotton / 40 percent nylon fabric used in the classic ``60/40" mountain parkas. Fabric has reasonable water-repellency, but is not waterproof. Wears like iron, yet exhibits a soft, cottony hand.

**Solarplex** This fabric combines tough Cordura yarns with extremely supple high-filament-count Supplex yarns. Used by Outdoor Research.

**Spandex** Lycra is DuPont's version of this synthetic fiber. Offers great stretch and recovery, good strength, abrasion resistance, and resistance to body acids. Used in combination with another fiber such as cotton or nylon.

**Spandura** A high-tech fabric combining the toughness of Cordura with the stretchiness of Lycra. Each yarn consists of 1000d Cordura fibers spun around a Lycra core. Spandura's resistance to abrasion is 2 1/2 times that of plain-weave 330 denier Cordura fabric, and 7 times that of either 70d nylon fabric or typical polyester/cotton fabric.

**Super Pluma** Patagonia's superlightweight WP/B fabric. It's a three-layer sandwich of 1.1-ounce ripstop nylon, a microporous laminate from Gore (Gore-Tex), and a tricot inner facing.

**Sympatex** Sympatex is a membrane like Gore-Tex but is a non-microporous flat film of "hydrophilic (water-loving) polyester block copolymer." It allows body heat to push perspiration vapor to the outside of the garment. It's available in a direct laminate (applied to the back of an outer shell), a three-ply laminate (Sympatex middle layer sandwiched between outer fabric and lining), or an insert laminate (free-hanging layer between outer shell and lining).

**Synchilla** Patagonia's name for Malden Polartec fleeces. Original Synchilla is equivalent to Polartec 300; Lightweight Synchilla to Polartec 200; Stretch Synchilla to 100S/200S.

**Taffeta** Any fabric that is woven with a plain weave to give a fine, smooth look.

**Thermastat** Thermal version of DuPont's Lycra for use in activewear. In theory, it works according to what your body demands -- it helps cool you when you're warm and warms you when you're cool.

**Thermax** DuPont's soft hollow-core polyester fiber that has a cottony feel. Used in underwear and activewear for its insulative properties. Thanks to its warmth, quick-drying capabilities, and low "stink" factor, it has become a favorite all-around base layer.

**Thinsulate** 3M's 35 percent polyester / 65 percent olefin blend insulation spun into a low-loft construction. Efficient insulator considering its minimal thickness; most often used in outerwear and gloves for its lack of bulk.

**Thermolactyl** Darnley's proprietary blend of Chlorofibre vinyon and acrylic. It's soft, cottony-feeling stuff that dries fast and is plenty warm, even when wet.

**Thermolite** New 100 percent polyester-fiber compact insulation from DuPont designed to compete with 3M Thinsulate. DuPont claims it is less sensitive to dry cleaning solvents and heat than polyester / olefin synthfills. It's usually used in garments where a trim look means more than puffy warmth.

**Thermoloft** DuPont's midloft synthetic insulation with a combination of Dacron solid-core polyester fibers and hollow Quallofil fibers. Used where high-loft fills are too bulky and low-loft fills aren't warm enough.

**Tri-Blend** Any fabric consisting of a blend of three fibers. Frequently that blend is cotton / polyester / nylon.

**Tricot** A fabric woven with two threads that resists unraveling and tearing by the nature of its weave.

**Triple-Point** Lowe's microporous polyurethane WP/B coating that's similar in function to Entrant. It comes in two weights: the 800 is less breathable, but has more waterproofing and more durability than the lighter weight 400 version, which offers more breathability than waterproofing.

**Ultrex** A microporous polyurethane coating from Burlington Industries applied to the inside of numerous fabrics with a Durapel DWR treatment on the outside. In our experience, it's generally more waterproof than breathable.

**Wickline** A bi-component fabric with hydrophilic nylon on one side and hydrophobic polyester fibers on the other used by Outdoor Research. This arrangement accomplishes two things: it wicks water very rapidly, and the polyester side feels dry even when the fabric is soaked.

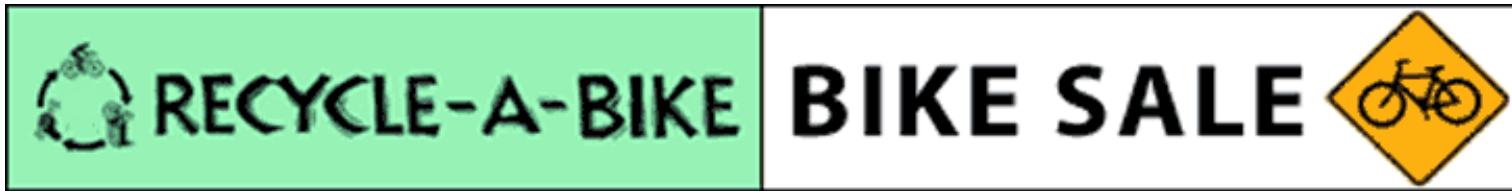
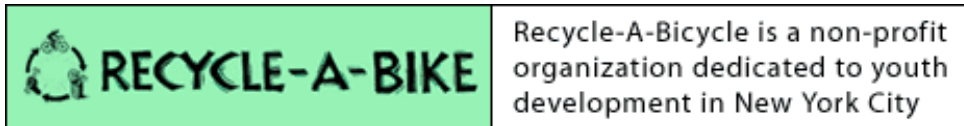


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The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for land, mineral, and wildlife management on millions of acres of US land. With over one-eighth of the US land mass under their control, the BLM also has plenty of outdoor recreation opportunities to offer.

The Bureau of Land Management areas include 34 National Wild and Scenic Rivers, 136 National Wilderness Areas, 9 National Historic Trails, 43 National Landmarks, 23 National Recreation Trails, and more. What does that mean for campers? Well, you can enjoy these natural wonders from 17 thousand campsites at over 400 different campgrounds, mostly in the western states.

Most campgrounds managed by the BLM are primitive, although you won't have to hike into the backcountry to get to them. The campsites will typically be a small clearing with a picnic table, fire ring, and may or may not offer some type of restroom or potable water source, so be sure to bring your own water.

BLM campgrounds are usually small with not many campsites and are available on a first come, first serve basis. You may not find a campground attendant, but rather an [iron ranger](#), which is a collection box where you can deposit your camping fees, usually only \$5-10 per night. Many of the campgrounds charge no fees.

The easiest way to find BLM campgrounds is at [Recreation.Gov](http://Recreation.Gov), which allows you to search for outdoor activities on public lands, including the national parks, national forests, and army corps of engineer projects. From the results page, BLM campgrounds are listed with a link to area descriptions and campground details.

## **Individual Undeveloped Campsites**

Undeveloped campsites are found throughout the public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Such campsites are located more than 100 ft from streams, at roadside turnouts, near interesting rock formations, and at other desirable locations. Dispersed, undeveloped campsites are normally recognized by the presence of a fire ring. Such informal sites are popular with vehicle campers, jeepers, and hikers.

When asked why they prefer dispersed campsites, visitors cite the freedom to set up camp as they please, to camp with a large number of friends, to camp in an area where pets are allowed, or to camp without having to pay for facilities found at developed sites.

### **Dispersed Sites are Open to the Public**

It is the general regulation of the Bureau of Land Management that undeveloped Federal lands under its administration are available to the public for camping and general recreation with the following provisions:

- 1. that camping at any one site is limited to 14 days per visit;**
- 2. that users pack out their trash;**
- 3. that users avoid camping within 100 feet of springs so that water is accessible to wildlife; and**
- 4. that campfires not be left unattended.**

## **Guidelines for Use**

Our public lands are being "discovered" by an increasing number of visitors. As a consequence, many campsites are showing signs of deterioration. You can increase the ability of dispersed sites to accommodate successive groups of campers by adopting a minimum-impact style of camping:

### **Camp at a previously used camp site, if possible.**

Research studies have shown that the most rapid negative changes to soil and vegetation occur during the first few times a campsite is used. If it is necessary to camp at a previously unused location, minimum impact camping techniques can reduce such impacts.

### **Maintain the beauty of campsites by staying on existing travel routes.**

Avoid driving, riding, or walking over areas where the vegetation is intact. Many of the most desirable undeveloped campsites are surrounded by networks of tracks. Over the years, the vegetation around these sites have been greatly reduced, and in some cases, soil erosion is very noticeable.

## **Do not put cans, bottles, or aluminum foil into a fire ring.**

These items do not burn, and their presence will lead subsequent users of the site to build a new fire ring.

## **Avoid building new fire rings.**

Redundant fire rings scar the natural beauty of sites and reduce the amount of space available for sleeping and cooking areas. If the site you select already has trash in the fire ring, please clean it out and place the trash in a bag for proper disposal.

## **Use only dead and down wood for campfires.**

Both dead and live trees add to the scenic qualities of campsites. Leave them for the next visitors to enjoy and as habitat for desert animals.

## **Burn Campfire logs to ashes, then douse with water.**

Do not smother a campfire with soil, as this will make it difficult for the next visitor to use the same fire ring. If you must leave a campsite before the fire burns all the wood, douse the fire with water before you are ready to leave camp, then stir it with a stick to make sure it is completely out.

## **Use a fire pan.**

A fire pan is a metal tray or garbage can lid used to contain a campfire and prevent the fire from blackening the soil. Before breaking camp, it is a simple matter to transfer cold ashes into a plastic bag or other container for disposal at home. If you use a fire pan carefully, it is possible to leave a campsite with no scars or evidence of your use.

## **Dispose of human waste properly.**

Solid body waste and urine should be buried in a hole six to twelve inches deep. The disposal site should be located well away from streams, campsites, and other use areas. Toilet

paper should be placed in a small plastic bag and put into your camp trash bag.

### **Pack out your trash (and a little extra).**

For years, public land managers have promoted the "pack-it-out" concept in an effort to foster a self-cleanup ethic among public land users. This program has generally been successful. Most people no longer leave or bury trash at campsites. While the pack-it-out program has reduced the amount of trash left by campers and day users on the public lands, it has not entirely eliminated unsightly trash. You can take an additional step by picking up trash left by less thoughtful people. This act helps maintain the scenic beauty of your public lands and frees land managers for other work. Think of that extra bag of trash you collect as your contribution to maintaining something you enjoy: undeveloped recreation sites on the public lands.

*For more information on minimum impact techniques:*

[Leave No Trace](#)



*fe*

## **FREE CAMPING**

Free Camping is available in the western United States on the federal lands (public lands). The US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management are the administrative agencies of these lands.

Both Agencies have developed campgrounds and heavily used recreation areas where they do charge fees. But there is a vast acreage with undeveloped camping areas that can be utilized by the general public with no fees. There are rules, however

- You are not allowed to camp next to riparian areas.

- You must move your campsite every two weeks to another campsite at least 30 miles away.
- Small parcels of private land are often scattered among the BLM lands. Be sure you have a map that shows the private land and do not camp on the private land without the landowner's permission.
- There are often restrictions on campfires. Be sure to check with the administrative agencies to see if campfires are allowed

To find these free camping areas:

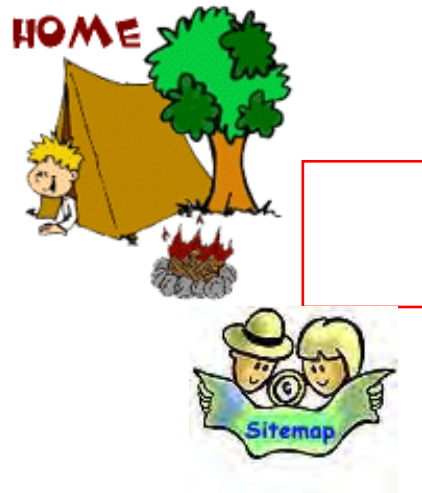
1. Pick a State where you would like to camp. Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska are all public land states.
2. Pick a area within that state.
3. Go online at [www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov) or [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us), find a state directory and within that state find a regional office for the BLM or a national forest for the Forest Service, near the area you wish to camp. (For the Forest Service, click on the national forest you selected and it will guide you to agency offices). You can request information from these offices or visit them, in person, and pick up information and ask questions.  
Be sure to get a map that can guide you to the federal land.

**Example 1:** You wish to camp on the LaSal Mountains near Moab, Utah. Go to [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us). Click on Utah. Click on Manti-LaSal National Forest. Click on Moab Office "Map" or call or write to the address given for the Moab office.

**Example 2:** You wish to camp on the BLM in the red-rock country near Moab, Utah. Go to [www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov). On the left side bar, click on Directory. Under state offices, click on Utah. Click on BLM Utah Field Offices. Click on Moab.

In most areas, on the public lands, you are allowed to ride horses, atv's and bicycles. Check with the local federal office to see if there are restrictions

on these recreational activities and to get information on trails in the area.



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[BREAKCAMP.COM](#), your online home for Outdoor Gear, Camping Equipment, Camping Supplies, Hiking Gear and much more! Anywhere you need to break camp, we hope that [breakcamp.com](#) can provide you the equipment to enjoy your stay.

[ingRus.com](#)"Camping-R-us Online Camping and Outdoor gear Supplier! As a Major supplier we can afford to give on all our items such Low Prices that you can't find just anywhere And of course we specialize in service to each and every customer!

[Camping World](#) at Real Goods, Inc is dedicated to providing the highest quality camping equipment at the very best prices!

[Eagle Optics](#): The leader in supplying optic equipment to birdwatchers, amateur astronomers and outdoor enthusiasts. We offer a wide selection of equipment from every major manufacturer of visual optics.

[Eastern Mountain Sports](#). We have been outfitting the outdoors for over 30 years. Now we offer secure online shopping, our explorations 'zine, our Adventure Finder, and much more at our new site.

[Gear And Guides; Outdoor Gear and Equipment](#) The site features free online topos, maps, guides and pictures for various outdoor activities. The site is also an online store to purchase equipment for outdoor adventures.

[Long Life Food Depot!](#) Ready-to-Eat Individual Serving Pouches are the correct mealtime solution for natural disasters, camping, hunting, and all outdoor activities!

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[Outdoor Bums](#): We cater to individual tastes by bringing you the highest quality huntin', fishin', campin' and outdoor gear, as we base our choices on Quality, Utility, Affordability and most of all, Value. Our belief is to only market products that adhere to these standards based on spending more than 50 years in the outdoors.

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[ON-TOUR!](#) Another site with National Park info!

[Aegyptus Intertrave!](#) Organizes adventure and trekking tours in Sinai and the Western Desert of Egypt, with jeeps, camel caravans, or hiking tours. They provide all equipment, like 2pers. tents, mattresses, sleeping bags. They guarantee perfect and friendly service! Please visit their site for more info.

[CAMP NET AMERICA](#) R.V./Camp directory, who is where, trip router and more.

[Cycle Touring and Camping](#)Organization: C.T.C.- C.D.A., A.L.C., M.A.C.U.M. offers Cycle Touring and Camping in the U.K.

[Free R.V. Campgrounds of the West](#)..Listings of free, easily accessible RV campgrounds in the West.

[GORP!](#) Gorp is a good page on recreation.



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[R.V.CAMPING](#) Web page for RV'ers.

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[SIERRA OUTDOOR GUIDES!](#) A great source for outdoor information on California's Sierra Nevada. Where to go, what to do, and how to do it! Reliable outdoor guides and cookbooks!

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[TRAVEL FILE](#) Trip planning. Vacation ideas.

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[The Trout Club!](#) At The Trout Club, we are planning the ultimate four season, family home away from home, as well as providing the best facilities for Holiday, Vacation, and Weekend family outings and activities. Come on out and hike the North Country trail to our hidden Forest Lake. The trail starts at your campsite.

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updated April 27th, 2004

"Where children's fun comes first"

There is so much baseball here, you can almost taste the peanuts and cracker jacks.



"Little League is a program of service to youth. It is geared to provide an outlet of healthful activity and training under good leadership in the atmosphere of wholesome community participation. The movement is dedicated to helping children become good and decent citizens. It strives to inspire them with a goal and to enrich their lives towards the day when they must take their places in the world. It establishes the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play."

Quote of the day:

"Improve Your Practice! Improve Your Game!, thats our motto. We want every player, coach, director and parent to love and enjoy the game of baseball as much as we do!

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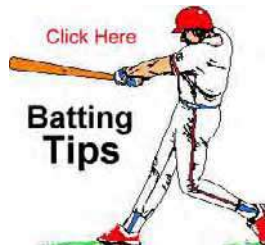
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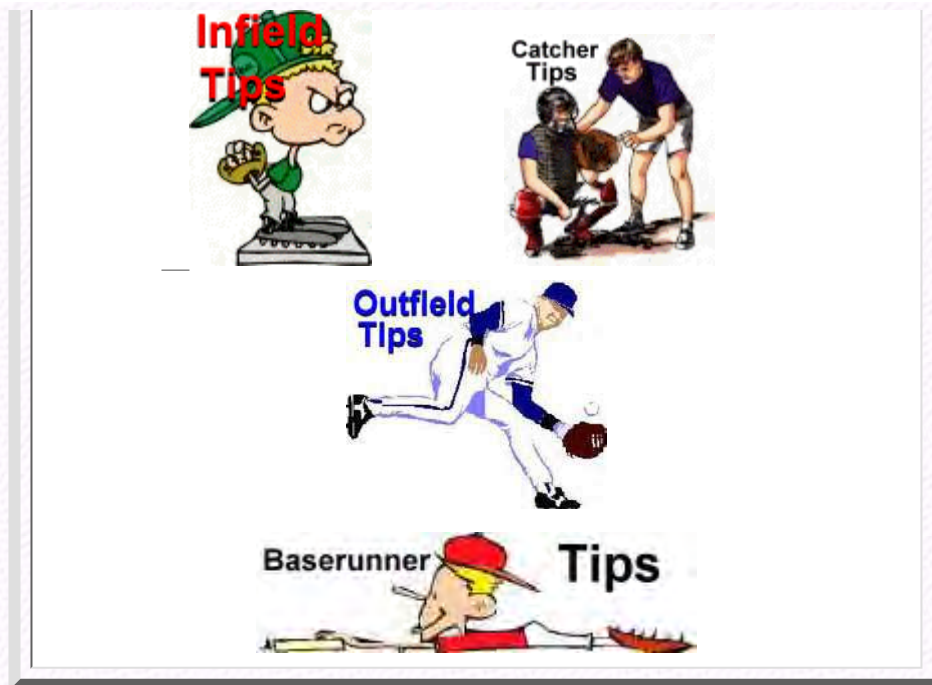
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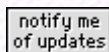




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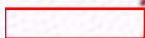
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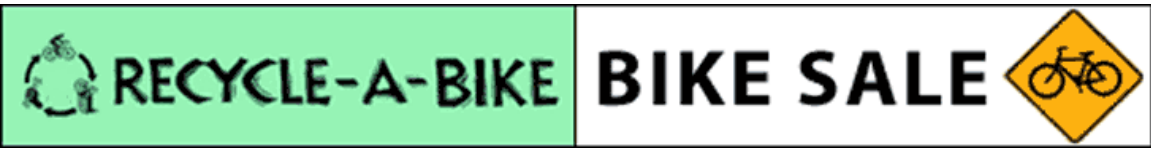
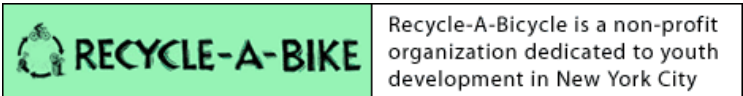
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## How To Clean Your Fish at The Campsite

That's simple,

**you don't!**

And here are some reasons why you should find a place away from your campsite to clean fish.

1. Campground critters (raccoons, skunks, crows, etc.) are attracted to the smell of fish and they will make a mess of your campsite trying to find the fish that you've already eaten.
2. Flies, mosquitos, and other bugs are attracted to any bits of fish, and they too are unwelcome guests.
3. It's unsanitary, because there aren't adequate means to clean up the mess. Use designated fish cleaning stations or clean fish while still at the lake, away from the campsite.
4. It's inconsiderate of your fellow campers. Besides the unpleasant smell, the pests and bugs

it attracts will invade neighboring campsites too.

## Tips:

1. Be sure your filet knife is very sharp, and bring a bottle of fresh water to rinse the filets and a covered container to hold the cleaned fish.
2. Discard any fish remains in appropriate containers.
3. Hose down the area where you cleaned the fish, or use a bucket to gather water from the lake and rinse the area. Please don't leave the fish guts laying around.

[Need Camping Tips?](#)





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FUNdamentals of  
Camping Homepage



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RECYCLE-A-BIKE

Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



RECYCLE-A-BIKE

BIKE SALE



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FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

Father's Day



Holiday Camping



Memorial Day



Veteran's Day



## Holiday Camping?

**Memorial Day - July 4th - Labor Day**

**I recommend holiday camping to no one.**

If you are still determined to camp you will find some tips to holiday camping here.

[Make Reservations](#) [Reserve a Site a Few Days Ahead of When You Wanted To Camp](#) [Get a Site Early](#)  
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## Make Reservations

A friend of mine who worked for The Department of Parks and Recreation has told me how he saw many unhappy campers on these holidays. Many families would travel for six or seven hours in a small car full of screaming children and barking dogs only to find that the park was full. The park was actually booked for six months in advance so these people had no hope at all of getting a camp site.

He called all of the parks in the surrounding areas searching for camp sites for these unfortunate people. By 5:00p.m. there would be no sites available within 200 miles of our park. All motels were booked up too - and he had to send many of these people home.

## Reserve a Site a Few Days Ahead of When You Wanted To Camp

Many camp grounds are actually sold out for holiday weekends before you can reserve a site.

There is a trick to this that many hard-core holiday campers use.

Most reservation systems have a specific sale date. That is; camp sites can not be sold too far in advance. Many parks sell camp sites up to six months in advance. If you wanted camp sites for July 3rd and 4th you would not be able to reserve the sites until January 3rd.

Here is the trick. If I decide to start camping from July 1st to July 4th I can make my reservations on January 1st, two days ahead of people who just want to camp on the holiday weekend. At the really popular parks, this is the only way to get a site on a holiday weekend.

Please be aware that if you reserve a site, you are expected to occupy it. Many people send out one family member ahead of the rest of the party to 'hold' their reserved site.

A few naughty people make extra reservations and try to 'scalp' their sites. This is frowned upon by the park staff and you may well find yourself without a spot to camp in if you try this! There isn't much the parks can do if you purchase a scalped camp site and lie and say that you are with the family who made the reservations - but don't get caught making the purchase!

You can also do this to get a really great site: Each day there will be people leaving their camp sites and going home. You can simply search for a better site each day until you get a really awesome one. This may sound like too much work for you - but you might change your mind once you see what site you might get stuck with!

## Get a Site Early

Just because you have a reservation doesn't mean you'll get a site you will like.

Most camp grounds do not reserve specific sites - just a site in general.

If you arrive at the campground late in the day, you will get your choice of whatever is left - and that's not usually very good.

Many people send one person ahead of the rest of the party to insure a good site for the weekend.

If you are planning on camping in an area that doesn't accept reservations, please call ahead and make sure that sites are available.

All parks allow you to stay for 7 days in a row and many allow 14 days in a row so the park you wish to camp in may be full for the weekend before you have finished packing your car.

## Look out for scams!

Sometimes local people will come to the park and take as many sites as they can. We caught a family holding a site 'auction' for six camp sites for July 4th. People were bidding as much as three times the price of a normal camp site. The family caught perpetrating this scam lost all of the money they had paid for six camp sites for four nights plus got a \$150 fine.

**You need to be aware  
of some of the complications  
of holiday camping.**

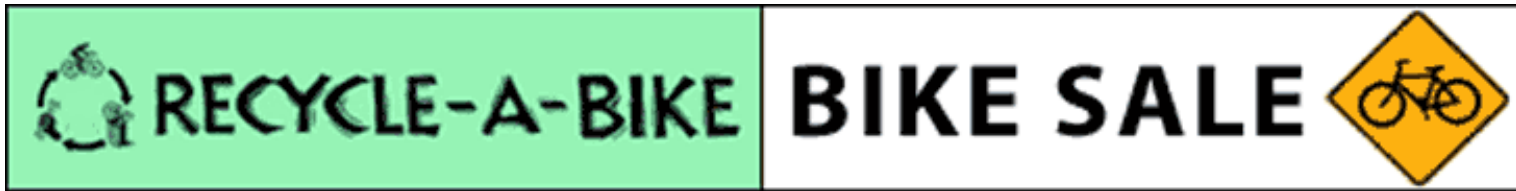
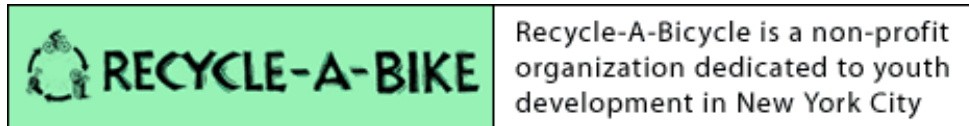


A poor choice of sites  
Lines at the showers  
People arriving at all hours  
Drunken revelry  
Clogged toilets  
No privacy  
Lots of litter  
No toilet paper  
Frustrated campers  
A zealous over-worked park staff



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The decisions of where to go camping is lots of fun. Your whole family can share in the decision. Everyone, young and old, can suggest ideas and desires about where to go, what to see, and what to do on the trip.

Divide up the tasks and have everyone check out Websites for camping in national parks, scenic parks, campgrounds, museums, fairs and other attractions.

Then get together and go over all the possibilities everyone found.

*Great forum for a family meeting*

**NO TELEVISION!**

## **Camping in National Parks**

National Parks are a great place to take your family camping. There are lots of things to do at these parks, both entertaining and fun for all ages.

Most National Parks provide fabulous scenic vistas. Some have

incredible opportunities for watching wildlife. Others have natural wonders like geologic formations, hot springs, caves, or waterfalls.

National Parks generally provide camping areas. However, some parks are more like museums and do not have camping on site. Visit these parks while passing through, or camp at a nearby state park or commercial campground.

Where ever you choose to go, your family will have a great time and you will wish you had more time so you could see even more of that park's attractions.

**[Find ALL the National Park Campsites here!](#)**

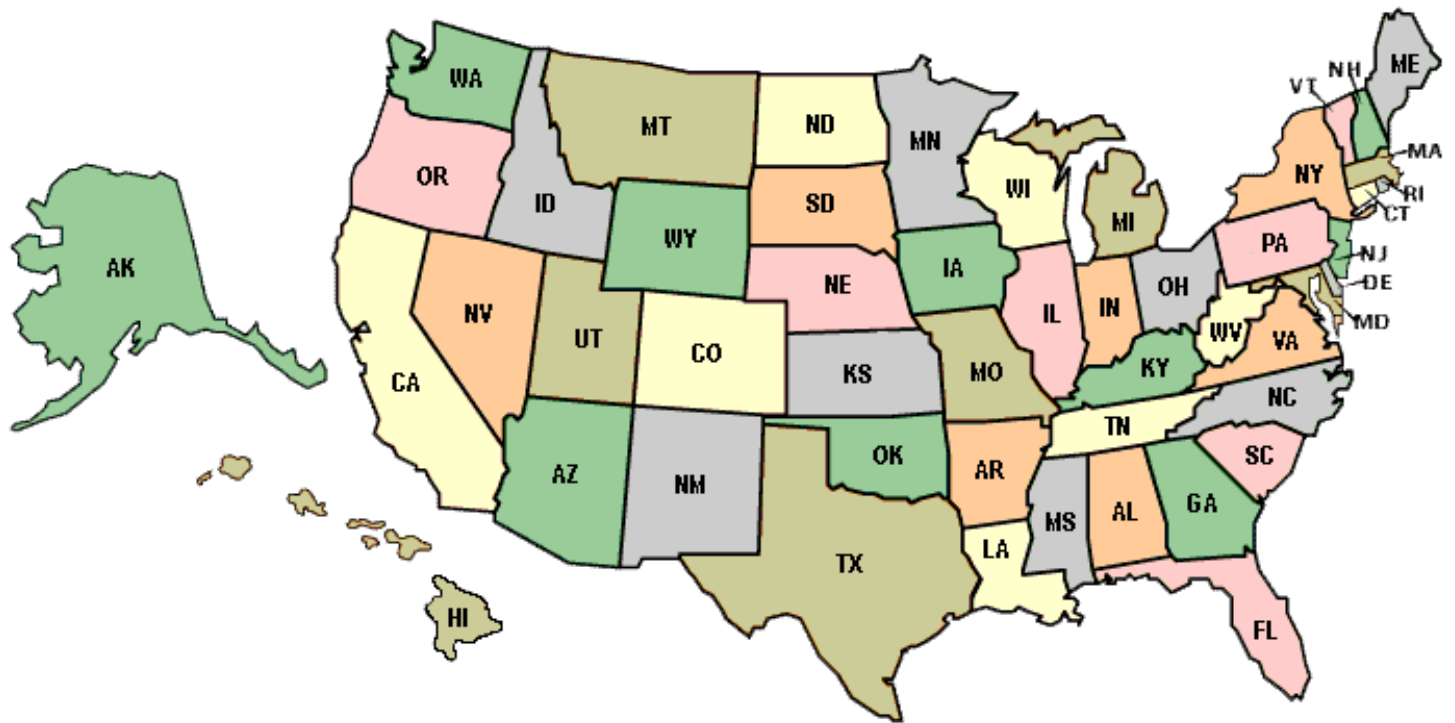
**[At  
http://www.nps.gov/](http://www.nps.gov/)**

## **Camping in State Parks**

State Parks offer some of the best family camping. There is always a state park close enough to home that you can get away for a weekend.

In addition, the state campsites are often located right on a lake shore, ocean beach, or some other major natural attraction, that commercial campgrounds can't afford to be near.

Most states have a central agency that controls the state parks, like a Department of Conservation, Department of Natural Resources or Forestry Department.



Campground reservations can be made for many state parks. Because the addresses and phone numbers for state agencies are in a constant state of flux, many of the numbers below will soon be outdated. Try the Tourism Division numbers first. Call information for new listings.

The links shown below will take you to those State Park agencies.

[Alabama](#)

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Montgomery, AL  
1-800-252-7275

[Alaska](#)

Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation  
Anchorage, AK  
1-907-269-8701

[Arizona](#)

Arizona State Parks  
Phoenix, AZ  
1-602-542-4174

[Arkansas](#)

Arkansas State Parks  
Little Rock, AR  
1-501-682-7777

[California](#)

[Colorado](#)  
Colorado Department of

[Louisiana](#)

Louisiana State Parks Office  
Baton Rouge, LA  
1-888-677-1400

[Maine](#)

Maine Bureau of Parks and Land  
Augusta, ME  
1-207-287-3821

[Maryland](#)

Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Annapolis, MD  
1-410-260-8186  
Office of Tourism Development  
1-800-543-1036

[Massachusetts](#)

Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism  
Boston, MA  
1-800-227-MASS

[Michigan](#)

[Ohio](#)

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Columbus, OH  
1-614-265-7000

Division of Travel and Tourism  
1-800-BUCKEYE

[Oklahoma](#)

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
Oklahoma City, OK  
1-405-521-3851

Tourism and Recreation Department  
1-800-652-6552

[Oregon](#)

Oregon Info Hotline  
(general camping information)  
1-800-551-6949

Oregon and Washington State Parks  
(campground reservations)  
1-800-452-5687

Natural Resources  
State Parks Division  
1-303-866-3437

### Connecticut

Connecticut Department of  
Economic Development  
Rocky Hill, CT  
1-800-CT-BOUND

### Delaware

Delaware Department of  
Natural Resources  
Division of Parks and  
Recreation  
Dover, DE  
1-302-739-4702

### Florida

Florida Division of Tourism  
Tallahassee, FL  
1-850-488-5607

### Georgia

Georgia Department of Natural  
Resources  
Division of State Parks  
1-404-656-3530

### Hawaii

Hawaii Department of Land and  
Natural Resources  
State Parks Division  
1-808-587-0400

### Idaho

Idaho Division of Tourism  
Development  
Boise, ID  
1-800-635-7820

### Illinois

Illinois Department of Natural  
Resources  
Springfield, IL  
1-217-782-1395

### Indiana

Indiana Department of Natural  
Resources  
Indianapolis, IN  
1-317-232-4124  
  
Hoosier Camper (camping  
information)  
1-800-837-7842

### Iowa

Iowa Department of Natural  
Resources  
Des Moines, IA

Michigan Department of  
Natural Resources  
Lansing, MI  
1-517-373-9900

Travel Bureau  
1 -800-5432-YES

### Minnesota

Minnesota Department of  
Natural Resources  
St. Paul, MN  
1-651-296-6157

Office of Tourism  
1-800-657-3700

### Mississippi

Mississippi Department of  
Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks  
Jackson, MS  
1-601-364-2120

### Missouri

Missouri Department of Natural  
Resources  
Jefferson City, MO  
1-800-334-6946

Division of Tourism  
1-800-877-1234

### Montana

Montana Department of Fish,  
Wildlife and Parks  
Helena, MT  
1-406-444-2535

Travel Montana  
1-800-541-1447

### Nebraska

Nebraska Game and Parks  
Commission  
Lincoln, NE  
1-402-471-0641

### Nevada

Nevada Tourism  
Carson City, NV  
1 -800-NEVADA-8

### New Hampshire

New Hampshire Office of  
Travel and Tourism  
Concord, NH  
1-800-386-4664

### New Jersey

New Jersey Division Parks and  
Forestry  
Trenton, NJ

### Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Bureau of Travel  
Marketing  
1-800-VISIT-PA

Pennsylvania Tourism Office  
1-800-564-5009

### Rhode Island

Rhode Island Tourism Office  
Providence, RI  
1-800-556-2484

### South Carolina

South Carolina State Parks  
and  
Recreation, Tourism Office  
Columbia, SC  
1-803-734-4135

### South Dakota

South Dakota Department of  
Tourism  
Pierre, SD  
1 -800-SDAKOTA

State Parks  
1-800-710-CAMP

### Tennessee

Tennessee State Parks  
Nashville, TN  
1-888-TN-PARKS

### Texas

Texas State Parks Information  
Austin, TX  
1-800-792-1112

### Utah

Utah Division of State Parks  
and Recreation  
Salt Lake City, UT  
1-801-538-7220

### Vermont

Vermont Travel Division  
Montpelier, VT  
1-800-VERMONT

### Virginia

Virginia Tourism  
Richmond, VA  
1-800-VISIT-VA

Virginia Campground Guide  
1-800-922-6782

### Washington

Washington Info Hot Line  
(general camping information)

1-515-281-5918

Division of Tourism  
1-800-345-IOWA

**Kansas**

Kansas Department of Wildlife  
and Parks  
Topeka, KS  
1-316-672-5911

Division of Tourism  
1-800-252-6727

**Kentucky**

Kentucky Department of Fish  
and Wildlife Resources  
Frankfort, KY  
1-800-858-1549

Department of Travel  
Development  
1-800-225-TRIP

1-609-292-2797

Division of Travel and Tourism  
1-800-JERSEY-7

**New Mexico**

New Mexico Department of  
Fish and Game  
Santa Fe, NM  
1-800-862-9310

Department of Tourism  
1-800-545-2040

**New York**

New York State Parks  
Albany, NY  
1-800-456-CAMP

**North Carolina**

North Carolina Wildlife  
Resources Commission  
Raleigh, NC  
1-919-733-3391

Division of Travel and Tourism  
1-800-VISIT-NC

**North Dakota**

North Dakota Game and Fish  
Department  
Bismarck, ND  
1-701-328-6300

Tourism Promotion  
1-800-HFLLO-ND

1-800-233-0321

Washington State Parks  
(reservations)  
1-800-452-5687

**West Virginia**

West Virginia  
Division of Tourism and Parks  
Charleston, WV  
1-304-259-5216

**Wisconsin**

Wisconsin Department of  
Natural Resources  
Bureau of Parks and Recreation  
Madison, WI  
1-608-266-2181

Division of Tourism  
1-800-432-TRIP

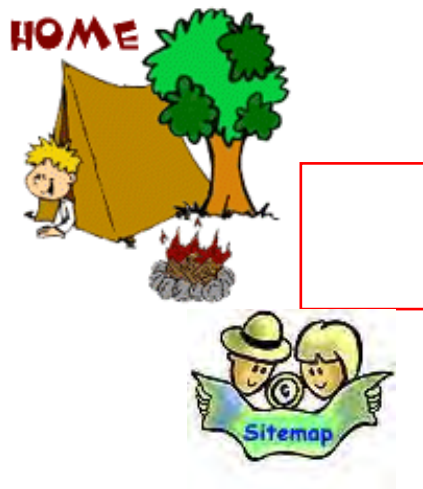
**Wyoming**

Wyoming Game and Fish  
Department  
Cheyenne, WY  
1-307-777-4600

Division of Tourism  
1-800-225-5996

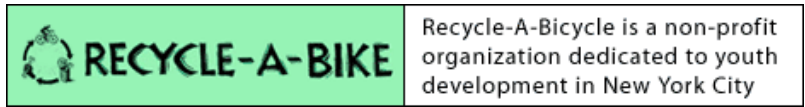
**Our Favorite**


<http://waveland.net/wavelandlake/>



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You can simply send this E-mail with nothing to write and I will be alerted with the Page that has a broken link.  
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## Car Games for Kids

### Gameboy !



This is an amazing toy that is perfect for road trips. In moderation these little video games can be great motivators and teach kids a few things too.



### Odd or Even

*What are the chances?*

Game for two players -  
 Have each child guess if there are more license plates that end in an odd or even number.  
*(plates that end in a letter do not count)*

1. Give each child a blank sheet of paper and a pencil *or something to mark with.*
2. Set a time limit,



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*usually 10-15 minutes.*

3. Have one child look for plates that end in an odd number, and the other look for an even number.
4. A tick mark or dash should be marked for each car they find.
5. At the end of the time limit, have the children add up their marks.



### **I Spy**



Pick out an object that everyone can see. Then give them a clue by saying, "I spy something . . ." (Say its shape, color or size) The other players ask questions about what you see and you only answer with "yes" or "no".

The first player who guesses right becomes the new spy.



### **A to Z**

Watch road signs, Billboards, Vehicles, Buildings, etc. for words that have the letter "A." in it. After "A", go to "B", and so on.

First one to "Z" wins!

*(For younger players you may want to skip letters that seldom show up on signs such as "Q", "X", and "Z")*



### **Rock- Paper- Scissors**

Rock, Paper, Scissors is a game for two players typically played using the players' hands. The two players each make a fist with one hand and hold the other open, palm upward. Together, they tap their fists in their open palms once, twice, and on the third time form one of three items:

a **rock** (by keeping the hand in a fist),  
a sheet of **paper** (by holding the hand flat, palm down),

or  
a pair of **scissors** (by extending the first two fingers and holding them apart).



Rock beats scissors.



Paper beats rock.



Scissors beats paper.

The winner of that round depends on the items formed. If the same item is formed, it's a tie. If a rock and scissors are formed, the rock wins, because a rock can smash scissors. If scissors and paper are formed, the scissors win, because scissors can cut paper. If paper and a rock are formed, the paper wins, because a sheet of paper can cover a rock. After one round is completed, another is begun. Play continues until one player reaches a predetermined score, or whenever the players' boredom is alleviated.

Often this game is played to pass the time while waiting in line for something, or while on a long road trip [as long as the driver isn't one of the players].

My kids also use this technique to find out who will go 1st at something, etc.



### Counting Cows

One of my favorites. Count the cows you see on your side of the car. If you pass a field full of lots of cows, you'd better count fast! If you pass a cemetery on your side of the car, you lose all your cows, but only if the opposing team calls "your cows are buried!". This game gets interesting when

distraction tactics are used to either cause your opponent to miss cows on their side of the road or to miss a cemetery on your side of the road. A white horse can count as a bonus. The team with the most cows wins.



### **Twenty Questions**

Think of an object, it can be anything as long as it is general. The first question the players will ask is: "Is it classified as Animal, Vegetable, or Mineral", or you can do "Person, Place or Thing". The players can then ask anything they want about the object as long as you are able to answer "yes" or "no" to their question. They try to ask questions that will help them narrow down their ideas until they are able to guess the object. If they can do it in less than 20 questions, they win!



### **What did I bring on my trip?**

You say, "I'm going on a trip and I'm bringing . . ."

The first player should name an item that starts with the letter "A". After "A", the next player will say the same thing but with the letter "B", and so on.



### **Guess the number**

Your child thinks of a number within a stated range and you try to guess the number by asking questions. For example: Your child says, I'm thinking of a number between 1 and 100. You ask: Is it more than 50? Your child: No. You: Is it an even number? Child: No. You: Can you divide this number into three equal parts? And so forth. After you have guessed the number, let your child guess a number that you are thinking of by asking similar questions.

*By asking questions about numbers, your child develops an understanding of some concepts, characteristics and meanings of numbers.*

*For example, this might be an opportunity to explain the difference between odd and even numbers.*



## Lines and Dots

This is that game you used to play in junior high. You make a grid of dots on a sheet of paper. Each player takes turns drawing a line between two dots. The lines are horizontal or vertical (not diagonal) and must be next to each other. If a player makes a complete square, they get to mark the square with their initials in the center of it, and they get another turn. The player with the most squares when all the dots are connected wins!



## Travel Scavenger Hunt

Give each child a list of items to watch for while driving. The list can be made up ahead of time and adjusted for the scenery. For a younger child who can't read, you might draw a little picture of each item next to the word so they will know what to look for.

Here are a few examples of items to hunt for:

CITY LIST:	SUBURBS LIST:	RURAL LIST:
flashing red light	school	silos
bus	flashing traffic light	railroad tracks
signs in foreign languages	food store	post office
dog	someone on a bike	cows
food store	statue	pond or lake
railroad tracks	church	dirt road
billboard with a child on it	playground	tractor
cop	flower garden or snowman	gas station
license plate that starts with "Q"	(depends on the weather)	horses
person talking on a cell phone	pickup truck	oil pump
	WalMart	barn
	dog in a car	deer



## Are We There Yet?

Try grappling with the Are we there yet? questions with a little diversionary questioning of your own.

Ask your child questions about how far you're traveling. Yards? Miles? Kilometers? How fast are we going? If it's 3:15 now, and it takes us two hours to get there, what time will we

arrive?  
How far have we gone?

Some other activities you might try while in transit are to have the kids watch for numbers on streets and buildings, phone numbers on the sides of trucks and other vehicles, dates on buildings, or business signs with numbers in them.

A Great Way To avoid the frequent question of "How much longer till we get there?", you may want to give your older children a pocket atlas and highlighter so they can map out the route as you travel. They can use the highlighter to plot out the route, circling different points of interest or particular milestones. When you pass those points, or a few minutes before you approach them, talk about them. Not only will this teach them good geography skills but it will give your children a sense of accomplishing the miles and cause them to take a more active interest in the landmarks of the trip. A compass will aide them in these endeavors.



### Woody

A "woody" is a car, van or other vehicle that has the wood panel sides. When you see one, yell "WOODY" and you get a point. Before you start, decide how many points the game is going to go before you declare the winner. The first one to 5 is a pretty good one, since there aren't nearly as many of them now as there were in the past.



### Car Bingo

Here are two different Car Bingo games. Each has 4 different cards with the items scrambled up. Print enough for each person to have one from each game. Pennies make good card markers, or you can print fresh ones for each trip and check off items with a pencil. You may even want to print these on cardstock paper and laminate them, so you can keep them in your box of travel goodies so they'll last for several trips.



**Vehicles**

- [Car Bingo Card 1](#)
- [Car Bingo Card 2](#)
- [Car Bingo Card 3](#)
- [Car Bingo Card 4](#)



**Roadside Items**

- [Roadside Bingo Card 1](#)
- [Roadside Bingo Card 2](#)
- [Roadside Bingo Card 3](#)
- [Roadside Bingo Card 4](#)



## Quiet As A Mouse

This is usually mom and dad's FAVORITE game of all. The trick to this game is to see who can be the quietest for the longest period of time. If you laugh, giggle or do anything that makes noise, you are out. The trick is NOT to see what you can do make the other person make noise, it's to see how long the entire car can be quiet.



## Slug Bug



Every time a VW Bug comes into view, the first one to see it shouts "Slug Bug!" and slugs the person sitting next to you (Not too hard though!).

The person who slugs the most people wins.

And that is about all there is to it. It's a silly game but fun, I promise. Give it a try.

Remember, it's just for fun, don't go beating each other to death or anything.

### *Variations of Rules*

***SLUG BUG RED or BLUE, etc***

The person shouts "Slug Bug!" along with the color of the VW

bug.

This will help when perhaps 2 VW Bugs are in view, you call the color of the one you slug for. Eliminates arguments of "which one?" or "I got that one!"

***No returns!!***

*No returns means they can not hit you back or the penalty is another hit by you for breaking the "no returns" rule.*

***Looking Away***

*Looking away from the beetle and looking back does not give you the chance to slug again. But walking away from one in a parking lot and seeing the same one again when you leave is eligible for slugging again.*

***Two hits for a convertible***  
*Self explanatory*

***NEW VW BUGS***

*You decide if they count or not!*

*Since the PT Cruiser made the scene,  
I have been introduced to this one . . .*

***CRUISER BRUISER***

Same rules as SLUG BUG except everytime you see a PT Cruiser and you shout "Cruiser Bruiser".



***Perdinkle or Pudiddle***

When you saw a one eye car (that means a headlight would have to be out) you slugged the person next to you and said "Perdinkle"

*[or "Pudiddle" in later years].*

Then you would have to show them the car your were calling on.

If the car was in fact a motorcycle instead, the person you hit gets to hit you back 10 times.



## Camping Themes for Kids six through eight

Pick a theme for the trips. It helps to organize activities around a central concept.

Much easier!

### "Western Theme"

including a chuckwagon meal, corn bread muffins and tea. You can try to come up with 20 ways to use a bandana around camp and practice tying knots with 1 foot sections of rope. Sing old western cowboy songs, try Cowboy poetry and learn a little about the stars.

### "The Survivor Theme"

focusing on back-to-the-basic camping essentials. Children this age can grate cheese, stir a cooking pot, fetch water, hand wash and hang laundry, clean up around camp and even pitch the tents with a little help. Take a hike (1 to 2 miles) with frequent breaks. Be sure to take along a trail mix snack the kids can make themselves. Make it a bit of a competition. Racing through mundane chores easily.

### "Explorers Theme"

themes like Lewis and Clark are great for this age group, too. They naturally love to explore. Take along a magnifying glass, containers, nets and plastic cups to catch and examine insects. Set a firm, no touching policy for reptiles, insects and plants until they've been identified- this saves a lot of worry. Use handbooks to make identification.

## At The Campsite

### Nature Scavenger Hunt

Make a list of things that can be found around a campsite or on a hiking trail, and see who can find the items fastest.

If you're in an area where nature shouldn't be disturbed, kids can identify things by sight.

*While you're searching for these items, keep in mind that you should **NEVER** move anything from where it lays, if nature put it there.*

*There are many animals that make their homes in areas that you wouldn't think of, and just imagine how you would feel if you were laying in your bed, and someone bigger and louder came along and starting moving things.*

*Hmm . . .*

*gives you a whole new perspective on it, doesn't it?*

*Also, while we're on the subject, no matter how cute those little bugs, salamanders, etc. are, they don't naturally live in a box or glass jar, and to put*



*them in there, is traumatic for them. Please look, take pictures, and admire,  
but please,  
don't pick them up or try to take them home . . .  
they're already home!*



## Scavenger Hunt

This scavenger hunt is a great one. The purpose of it, is to find as much "garbage" in the woods as you can, to pick it up, dispose of it properly, and to get points at the same time. We recommend that you use gloves for this one. If you don't have gloves, you might try using two sandwich bags, one for each hand. If you don't have either of these things, we recommend that perhaps you wait until you do.

***DO NOT PICK UP ANY TYPE OF NEEDLES!***

*Go find an adult and show them where you found it, and let them dispose of it properly!*

*If you find anything else that you're not sure of, be sure to get an adult.  
This game is for fun and for being environmentally kind, but nobody wants to get hurt by doing something nice.*

Be sure to take a garbage bag along with you on your trek, and remember, you get the points for EVERY piece of garbage that you pick up, not just the first one that you find!

The animals and other critters in the woods thank you very much for your interest and for cleaning up after those that wouldn't do it for themselves! . . .

You are indeed a "GOOD CAMPER"



## Flashlight Walks

Taking a walk in the dark is a bit daring, even eerie, and full of unusual sights and sounds. While it's still daylight, have one parent scout out a short, safe trail near your site. Then, after dark, give each child a flashlight, and slowly walk along the trail. Focus on such details as a pair of glowing eyes staring back from a tree branch, or a glistening spiderweb. Ask your kids to describe what they see. When you've covered a few dozen yards, turn off the flashlights, have everyone be quiet, and listen to the provocative sounds of night. If a child gets scared, quickly turn the flashlights back on.



## Water balloon fights

are great fun.

Please pick up all the left over balloon pieces so the wild animals don't eat them and die.



## CARDS



Need the rules to just about any card game?

[Click Here!](#)

## **OLD MAID**

Take three queens out of a regular deck of playing cards and set them aside.

The one remaining queen will be the Old Maid.

The game is played with 3 to 5 people and all of the cards are dealt to the players (it doesn't matter if someone has more cards than someone else).

To play, after the cards are dealt, each player looks at their hand and if they have any pairs (2 cards with the same number) they place them face up in front of them. If you have three of the same card, you have to wait to see if you get the 4th one.

The person to the left of the dealer starts the game. The player to his left draws one card out of that persons hand and if the card makes a pair, it gets laid down. This continues with each player getting a turn at drawing a card from the other person's hand.

The game is over when the only card left is the Old Maid. The person holding the Old Maid at the end of the game loses.



## **War**

This game requires two players and a complete deck of regular playing cards.

The dealer deals all the cards into two piles, face down.

The person who did not deal lays a card, face up, on the table. (You do **NOT** look at your cards; just pull them off the top of

the stack that the dealer dealt you.)

The other person does the same thing.

The person with the highest card (*aces are high, twos are low*), win and takes the two cards and places them in another pile next to the pile he's already using. If you run out of cards from the one stack, you start using the other, still face down, still without looking at them.

**DO NOT** shuffle them!

If each of you turn over a card with the same value on it, that's **WAR!** Each player places two cards, face down, and each of you turn over a third card.

Whoever has the highest card, wins ALL of the cards.

*Uh-oh, you did it again!*

*You each turned over the same card again?*

*That's okay;*

*you just lay two more cards down, face down, and turn over a third card. The winner is the person with the highest card.*

The winner is the one that ends up with all of the cards at the end of the game

OR,

if in a WAR situation, doesn't have enough cards to settle it.



## **GO FISH**

This game is played by two to five people, and requires one regular deck of playing cards.

The dealer deals all of the cards to the players, plus one additional, this is the "fishing pool".

If any player has all four of any one value (*for example, 4 - 4's*) then they lay them down. When all of the players have laid down all of the sets that they have, the game starts.

The person to the left of the dealer starts. That person turns to the person on their left and asks them if they have a card (i.e., a 2), in order to ask for a card, you must be holding one of that same value. If the person has the card that you asked for, you get to ask again.

If the person doesn't have the card that you asked for, then you are told to **Go Fish!**

To do that, you must draw a card from the Fishing Pool.  
If it is the card that you were asking for, you can continue  
your turn.

If it isn't, then it is the next persons turn.

The game continues until one player has no cards left in their  
hand



## CAMPFIRE GAMES

Choose games that are suitable for all ages of those at your  
campfire.

### **Never Ending Story**

It starts Once upon a time . . .  
then the next camper adds a line, and then the story is  
passed around and around and around.



### **Charades**

Players act out the syllables of a word or phrase while the  
others try to guess what it is. Divide the den into two teams.  
Write a word or phrase and give it to one team. Ask them to  
leave the room to plan how they will dramatize the charade.  
After a quick rehearsal, the team returns and presents its  
act. Give each member of the other team a chance to guess  
what is being dramatized. Suggest that the teams start with  
simple charades, such as "air gun," "cat tail," "football," and  
"fire eater." When they have had some practice, try more  
complex charades such as TV show titles, book titles, and  
particular places.



### **I'm Going on a Hike Game**

You start by saying "I'm going on a hike and I'm taking bread.  
You say something that starts with your first initial. Make  
sure only one or two know this is how you play. If the person  
takes the correct thing you say "oh, you can go." If they say  
something starting with the wrong letter, "Oh, you can't go."

It's fun to see how long it takes everyone to figure out the secret.



### **Famous Names**

You have to think of a famous person (or someone everyone has heard of), both first and last name and the next person has to think of a famous person with the first name beginning with the last letter of the last name of the person mentioned before. EX. Bill Clinton, Charles Manson, Melanie Griffith etc. The idea is to get the next person stumped. You can't repeat the same name, and if someone gets a double letter name (ex. Marilyn Monroe) it switches directions - lots of fun.



### **One Up One Down**

The object of the game is to figure it out. Everyone sits around the fire and has a choice of three things to say; they can say "One up one down," "two up", or "two down." The way you know what to say is based on your hand/arm position. You say "one up one down" if one arm is up and the other is down, "two up" if both are above the waist, and "two down" if both are below the waist. It will take both younger campers and older campers a little while to figure out the "pattern." This game works best if only a few people know how it works. When no one gets the pattern, you can make your arm motions a little more obvious. Everyone will have a good time trying to figure out how the game works.



### **The Telephone Game**

One person thinks of a short sentence, phrase, short rhyme, etc. That person whispers it to the person on their right.

That person then whispers what they heard to the next person on the right as this continues to the last person. The last person announces out loud what it was that was whispered to them.

You will be amazed how often it will not be what started off in

the beginning.

*Beware: Some will mess it up on purpose*

## Is anyone hungry yet?

*Avoid restaurants and have a rest stop picnic. Keep a small cooler in your trunk with sandwich fixings for roadside picnics. No need to assemble the sandwiches ahead of time. Your children will be much happier having the freedom to run around in the fresh air rather than being stuck in a restaurant. A relaxed picnic in a park can become a fond family memory!*

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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING Care & Maintenance of your Tent

*A tent is one of the most sizable camping investments you'll make.  
Take good care of your shelter and it will return the favor.*

**Here are some hard-won tips for maintaining a healthy tent:**

### **Moisture = mildew.**

Try not to pack a wet tent into its stuff sack. If weather permits, let it air-dry as long as possible while you pack up the rest of your gear. When it's rainy and you're forced to pack it up wet, pitch it again as soon as you get to the next camp, so it spends as little time as possible in that sodden sack. When you get home, hang it on a line ASAP and let it air-dry before you store it.

### **Be gentle with your poles.**

When assembling poles, don't flick them and snap them together carelessly

...  
this will result in nicks along the joints, which can eventually develop into cracks and breaks.

Fit each piece together carefully. When breaking down poles start in the middle and work toward the ends. This causes less stress on the shock cord inside. And remember, just because a pole breaks, you don't have to buy a new tent. Contact a pole repair specialist to have yours fixed or a new one made.

### **Use the stake and pole sacks.**

Store your tent poles and stakes in separate sacks to avoid ripping or puncturing the tent fabric as you pack up.

### **Be nice to your zippers.**

It sounds obvious, but don't yank on them roughly.

This is how most zippers are damaged.

### **Beware of UV.**

*Ultra Violet*

Over time, too much exposure to direct sunlight can weaken fabric, especially nylon.

Don't leave your tent set up in the sun any longer than necessary.

### **Check the seams.**

Seams are where most leaks occur, so make sure any untaped seam is carefully treated with a sealer such as Seam Grip.

Every couple of years, you'll want to reseal.

### **No inside cooking.**

Avoid cooking inside your tent for two reasons:

1. the carbon monoxide can kill you  
and
2. you can easily burn a hole in the tent fabric,  
which is fairly flammable.

Cook in the vestibule if you must, but be sure to ventilate well.

### **Keep it clean.**

When the dirt gets unbearable, set your tent up in the yard on a sunny day, and wipe it down, inside and out, with a mild soap diluted in some warm water.

Let it air-dry completely before storing.

**Note:** Never put any part of your tent in the washing machine -- the coatings will peel and you can do serious damage to the fabric.

### **Timely first-aid.**

Holes and rips happen.

When they do, it's key that you fix them as soon as you get home. Don't wait until the night before your next trip. When making patches, use tight stitching and be sure to seam-seal your work.

Also, use round patches -- they're less likely to peel than square or rectangular ones.

**Staking tips.** Windstorms can wreak havoc on poorly pitched tents. Spare your tent wear and tear and keep it firmly planted by using all the available stake-out points and guy lines.

[See Staking Your Tent](#)

**Use a ground cloth.**



This prevents sticks and stones from puncturing or scarring the tent floor.

You can use painters tarps  
(these are thin clear plastic, and you basically get one use out of them)  
and the rolls of plastic sheeting that contractors use  
(You can get them at Wal Mart for about \$5 per roll.)

As a ground cloth it can be used a couple of times until holes start to develop in it, then just throw it away, and make a new one.



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FUNDAMENTALS OF  
CAMPING

Staking down your tent

## Using the right stake for the terrain

Today's popular tents can be typified by dome-shaped, free-standing designs and made out of high-tech, synthetic materials. With an adequate rain-fly and appropriate tarp protection, these tents can withstand just about anything that Mother Nature can throw at them.

Just about anything that is,  
but the wind!

To understand the adverse effects that wind can play on a tent, one need only look at a tent from an aerodynamic perspective. The consequence of wind blowing across the dome shape of a tent is not unlike that of air passing over the curved wing of an airplane, namely lift. And this lift is the main reason why you need to stake your tent, for without the stakes your tent could quickly become a kite in the lightest of winds and destroy itself as it tumbles through the woods or across the sand dunes.

Of course, another reason to stake your tent might be that you didn't find a level campsite, and you toss and turn in your sleep, and you know that if you don't stake your tent you'll wake up in the morning and find yourself and your tent in the next campsite, or worse yet, in the creek or lake.

When choosing a campsite, a primary consideration should be to find one that has

relatively high, level ground for setting up your tent. Such a campsite will help to keep you drier, should it rain, and fixed in place, should you toss in your sleep. Another consideration, particularly if you are camping in a windy locale, is to find a campsite where you can use stakes.

Different stakes are made to work in different types of earth.

Remember too:

- **there is no one stake that works in all terrains**

The small diameter titanium stake for use in hard dirt is not appropriate for sand or snow camping; just as the bulky angle iron/aluminum stake you use when camping at the beach won't work well in hard dirt.

- **some stakes work in some terrains sometimes**

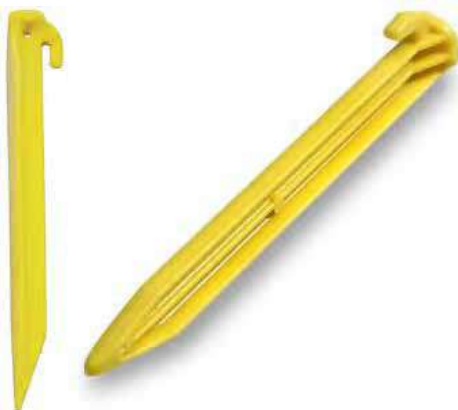
Those bulky angle iron/aluminum stakes that are used at the beach may pull up quite readily should it rain.

- **there are some terrains in which no stake works**

Backpackers and mountain climbers can attest to the problems that they face when confronted with rocky terrain and stone outcroppings that resist all stakes.

The next time you're camping, observe the methods of others. Whose tent stays put in the wind? Whose stays dry in the rain? Then follow the successful techniques of your fellow camper's.

I use the plastic ABS pegs.



They are often known as Powerpegs.

These large plastic tent stakes are ideal for family camping  
Large head makes them easy to pound in

They are lightweight, tough and the cheapest to purchase and work well.

Carry some extras in case you hit rocks, the tip can bend.

If they get damaged the tips can be sharpened on a sander. You could probably also whittle them. If you leave the bent tips alone the stakes will be hard to drive.

I carry a inexpensive plain 16 oz claw hammer for driving and pulling pegs.

And then again,  
you could purchase one of these nifty fandangled products . . .



## Here are some of the more common Tent Stakes

Click on an image for an enlarged view  
and a brief description and approx. pricing



Lightweight Aluminum Stake



Skewer Stake



Aluminum Tubular Tent Stakes



MSR Groundhog Stakes



Kelty Nobendium™



Sand Hog



Perforated Snow Stake



Heavy Galvanized Steel Hook Stake



Nail Pegs



Superlite Aluminum Tent Stake



"Y" Stake





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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING Tarps

and thier many usage

[\[ALWAYS PUT UP TARPS!\]](#)

[\[What Kind of Tarp Should I get?\]](#) [\[How To Utilize Your Tarp\(s\)\]](#) [\[Grommets!\]](#)

### ALWAYS PUT UP TARPS!

You can't have too many tarps!

We use them all the time.

The obvious reason is to shelter you from rain.

Tarps are great way to keep you and your gear dry, Once your tent and gear get wet your trip is going to be miserable.

"Don't get me wrong, even when we were wet and miserable, we still had a good time, but it would have been a LOT better if we hadn't been wet."

It doesn't matter how good your tent is, if it rains hard enough, and for long enough,  
you are going to get wet!

If the rain comes down hard enough, it will come right through the fabric of all but the best tents, and if there is ANYTHING leaning against the inside of any of your tent walls, I guarantee water will find it's way in.

Also, even if you seal your seams, they are pretty likely to leak!

**You can walk around a camp grounds in the rain and see for yourself, campers with tarps can hang around outside by the fire, play cards or cook dinner while campers without tarps remain trapped in their tents.**

**What would you rather do?**

If not for rain . . .  
then for shade,  
the only place to escape a burning hot day besides the cool water is under the tarp.

Tarps also keep tree debris off tables, chairs and generally making the campsite bit more orderly. They can also hide you from wildlife and other campers, making your site a little more private, especially in those crowded camp grounds!

You can redirect wind for a breeze in the campsite, making it hard for bugs to fly while providing oxygen for the fire to burn well. In cold windy weather they can keep wind out of the camp site while retaining some of the heat from the fire.

If more tarps are needed, tie them independently of each other, this way if one comes down the rest stay up. Each tarp must have all four corners tied to a solid object such as trees. Make sure that the tarps horizontally overlap so that rain can't get through.

**Never tie two tarps together.**

This puts too much stress on the tarps during strong winds and storms. If one of the tarp's corners should come down, so will everything tied to that tarp. Each tarp should have four anchor ropes tied to a solid fixed object like a mature tree or a solid ground spike.

Poles are a benefit, especially in areas without strong trees. Try to put the tarps up without poles if possible, and then add the poles to enhance them. This ensures that the tarps can support themselves if anything should happen to the poles.

If your tarp should tear during your trip buy a new one before your next trip.

Once a tear is formed the tarp will never recover to its original condition even if you sew it.

**What Kind of Tarp Should I get?**

There are a couple of types of plastic and tarp that can be used to keep your tent and gear dry.

Tarps come in several varieties.

Most stores sell the blue poly tarps; these are basic, and fairly durable.

Some times you can find tarps that are brown, green, or silver. Generally, these colors tend to be a bit heavier, and stronger than the basic blue tarps.

In addition to these, you can also use painters tarps (these are thin clear plastic, and you basically get one use out of them) and the rolls of plastic sheeting that contractors use (You can purchase these at Wal Mart for about \$5 per roll.)

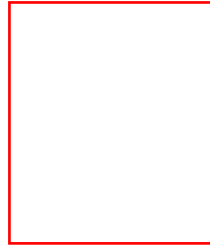
You can use these items to make ground cloths for under your tent, and to cover your fire wood.

As a ground cloth it can be used a couple of times until holes start to develop in it, then just throw it away, and make a new one.

**How To Utilize Your Tarp(s)**

Let nature decide where the rope should be tied. Begin by tying the two lower corners where you want the runoff to be. Then pick up the next corner to be tied and point it where it wants to go. Tie a rope to the corner; make sure the rope is long enough to go where you want. Tie a heavy object to the other end of the rope and throw it over the

branch of choice.



Find the end of the rope and pull the tarp taut, tie it off with a temporary knot.

Repeat for remaining corner.



In cold, wet weather, angle the tarp with the low edge facing the wind. The wind will be forced over the campsite instead of through it, more importantly water can run off the tarp instead of collecting in a pool.



In warm, dry weather, try to angle the tarp with the high edge facing the wind. This creates a sort of parachute, raising the tarps in strong wind.

The way you set up the tarps is very important.

Your tarps must be capable of handling what ever Mother Nature throws at them.

It may not seem like a big deal, but it can be very serious.

For instance, a tarp that covers a tent which measures 20' x 30'.

During a rain storm, a LOT of water lands on this tarp. The harder it rains the more water the tarp collects.

The tarp has to be able to drain that water as quickly as it comes down.

Otherwise, the water starts to pool up. Water weighs about 8 lbs. per gallon. If water begins to pool up, it won't be long before the weight of the water is more than your tarp, and rigging can hold.

When that tarp comes crashing down on your tent, with 150 lbs. of water pooled up in it,  
you don't want to be under it!

It is very important then, to think about drainage when you are setting up your tarps.

Naturally, if the site has a slope, you need to consider the slope when setting up the tarps. Ideally, you want to have the tarps drain on the downhill side of the site. Wal Mart sells adjustable height tent poles for about \$6 each that are great for holding up the edges of tarps. I use these to help me arrange my tarps to drain where I want them to. These poles extend up to about 8' high, but sometimes that isn't enough. I like the lowest end of my tarp to be high enough to walk under without bending down. For me, that is about 6'. The middle of the tarp has to go over my



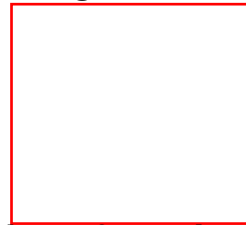
tent, which is a bit over 7' tall. In order to keep a good slope, I need the high end of my tarp to be between 8.5' and 9' high.



If water collects on top of your tarps, raise the **top corner** with a stick or pole allowing the water to run off the sides. Don't try raising the center because the tarp may be punctured in the place you least want a hole. Too much water collecting on your tarps will eventually cause them to come crashing down.



You can create a lean-to with a tarp by pegging one side very low to the ground.



This arrangement will reflect heat from the fire and can heat up the entire area in moderate winds. A lean-to is the basic structure for survival, with minimal resources, in a cold climate. Be sure to peg the low side of the tarp towards the wind.



In heavy winds, tarps often cannot handle the strain. Often if the wind starts blowing, it can get under a tarp and snap it taught which can be enough of a shock to snap a tie down. In this situation you must tie the end of the strained rope to a counter weight instead of a solid object.



The rope should be thrown over a strong branch. Then tie a heavy object to the end draping over the branch. When a strong wind comes the counter weight will be lifted a bit, when the wind dies down the counter weight will pull the tarp taunt.

You can also try using bungee cords between your tie down and your tarp to allow for some shock absorption.

Using the bungee cord allows the sudden shock to be absorbed, and prevents the tie down from breaking.



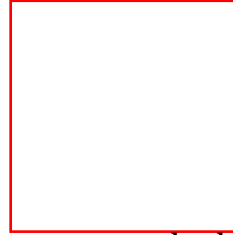
## Never tie tarps to vehicles.



If you forget and drive off with the tarp tied to the car, it's coming down.  
*Of course, this will happen in the worst rain of the trip.*  
Each tarp must have all four corners tied to a solid object such as trees.



Do not damage trees when putting up your tarps.



Before you hammer that nail into a tree look around, you will likely find two or three nails already there from previous disrespectful individuals. Remember that those trees have to service hundreds of people every year; it doesn't take much to destroy something so fragile.

Duct tape is as good as any temporary repair kit you can buy.



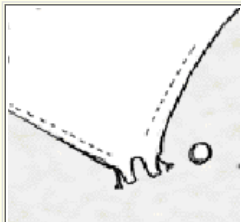
Make sure the tape is body temperature to help it stick. The tape adheres best on clean dry surfaces but will sticks to just about anything, including a damaged canoe. An added bonus is it can be used to prevent blisters by applying a square of it to bare skin reducing abrasion.

## GROMMETS!


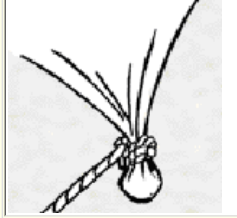
One of the stable things in camping, something that never changes, is that grommets fail.

A tarp is only as strong as it's grommets, the strain on those points is often strong enough to cause a grommet to separate from the material.

There is a way to fix this corner by making an emergency grommet with a pebble; the technique is simple and remarkably effective. This hand made contraption can often outlast the original brass factory grommets.



Start by finding a small pebble or piece of wood. Any shape will do, you can even use a pen cap or AA battery, whatever is lying around the campsite.

	<p>Place the pebble on the tarp near the corner and fold the end over the pebble, completely covering it. You can roll it over more than once if you need to but the less you do this the better.</p>
	<p>Now tie a rope around the tarp just after the pebble, forming a sack around the pebble. This grommet is very strong if done correctly, it should outlast the tarp itself. Of course you won't get the same drainage as a smooth flat tarp without the wrinkles caused by the knot of the pebble grommet.</p>



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BIKE SALE



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## Hammocks



[Advantages Of Hammock Camping](#) [Selecting A Hammock Campsite](#) [Setting Up A Hammock](#) [Staying Warm In A Hammock](#) [Buying A Hammock](#) [Some Safety Do's and Don'ts](#)

### Advantages Of Hammock Camping

- When properly fit, they are far more comfortable than ground beds
  - Can come with a complete shelter with bug net and rain canopy
- Large 8X10-foot rain canopy makes a stand up shelter with a bed fit for a king
  - Reduced tossing and turning
- Horizontal back- and fetal-sleep positions are possible
  - Reduced back discomfort
- No more crawling around on the ground to make camp
  - Ultra lightweight
- Adequate rain and storm protection
- Make/break camp in rain w\o pack items getting wet
  - Adjust canopy for fair or foul weather



Unlimited campsites in forested terrain

- Greater freedom than using tents or tarps



Generally takes only minutes to find a campsite

- Sleep above rocks or roots
- Sleep above briars, cactus, poison oak, etc.
- Quick set up and take down

- Use as lounge chair
  - Avoid snakes
  - Avoid slugs and spiders
- Avoid sleeping on the hard ground, rocks or roots typical of many tent or tarp sites
  - Avoid sleeping on wet or uneven ground



Backcountry Camping Avoid crowded or abused campsites



Backcountry Camping Hide from cold wind behind mountain ridges

- Avoid storm-exposed campsites
  - Camp at bug-free sites



Backcountry Camping Camp at scenic sites

- Camp at sites with sunset or sunrise views



Backcountry Camping Camp out of sight

- Avoid the food-robbing critters that are common at the usual ground campsites
- Avoid high-risk bear territory by camping in low-risk habitats unsuitable for tents or tarps
  - Avoid ground mice and rats
    - Camp in greater peace and harmony with nature
- Use as tarp and Bivy sack on the ground when no trees are available or temperatures drop
  - Convenient way to follow Leave No Trace camping ethics
  - Can be custom made for any camper's height or weight

## Selecting A Hammock Campsite



- Avoid cold wind by camping on the lee side of hills, ridges or cliffs
  - Camp on steep rugged mountainsides
  - Camp on mountaintops with no suitable tent or tarp sites
    - Camp on cliff tops

- Camp at base of cliffs, even in the midst of large breakdown boulders
  - Camp deep in the forest
  - Camp on rocky, brushy, wet or uneven ground
  - Avoid camping near springs, streams or lakes
- Camp far from water sources by making dinner before stopping and making a dry camp
  - Camp in windy spots to keep bugs away
- Avoid wet buggy tent or tarp sites by finding dry bug-free sites
  - Camp off the beaten track and out of sight
  - Camp close to towns without being seen or disturbed
  - Camp miles from the nearest tent campsite
- Continue traveling until dark or later, knowing you can easily make camp anywhere only moments after deciding to do so
  - Avoid worry of finding campsites already occupied
  - Set up camp easily and quickly when bad weather strikes
  - Avoid setting up in areas prone to heavy dew, such as open grassy meadows on cold windless nights where all objects above the ground, including the hammock, will collect excessive condensation

### Setting Up A Hammock

- Select sturdy supports, such as trees, rocks, etc
  - Trees should be at least 4 in diameter
- Select support spacing of 12-16'; generally 4-6 paces between trees
  - Avoid tree damage by using flat webbing instead of round ropes
  - Avoid tree damage by using overlapping 4-wrap knots
- If forced to tie a knot in a hanging strap, insert a stick or a large loop of the free end of the strap into the knot to facilitate untying it later
  - Loosen the bug net support line before pitching the hammock
  - Position 2-4' of hanging strap on each end of hammock
- Attach hanging straps at same height above ground for level hammock
- Set up on sloping ground often requires tree knots at different heights above the ground in order for hammock to be level
  - Before occupying hammock, step back and visibly judge if it is level; readjust setup if necessary
- Shorten one hanging strap or raise/lower one hanging strap tree knot to adjust pitch of hammock

- Leave some sag in unoccupied hammock; do not stretch tight
  - Adjust comfort by readjusting setup if necessary
- Adjust interior space below bug net by readjusting the support line after the hammock is occupied
  - To make camp in rain, set up canopy first
    - To break camp in rain, take down canopy last
- Use socks or bandanas to stop rain from seeping along hanging straps and reaching hammock
- For lounge chair, hang bug net and bug net support line out of the way over the back side of the hammock
  - Remove bug net and bug net support line to save weight in winter
- When bugs are not a problem, remove bug net for enhanced harmony with nature and better star views
  - Stow personal items like eyeglasses, wrist watches, flashlights, bandanas, etc. by hanging them from the bug net support line inside the hammock
- Stow larger items like water bottle, shoes/boots, book/map, jacket, etc. within reach on ground beneath hammock
- Hang backpack from hammock strap so it is beneath the rain canopy and does not touch the ground
- When in porcupine country, hang shoes or boots from hammock straps; leave nothing on the ground
  - Hang wet or soiled clothing from hammock straps or rain canopy guidelines
- Use 4-wrap knots for hammock and rain canopy as described in Chapter 1 to ensure canopy is centered over hammock
- In high wind or stormy conditions, make sure all lines are tied tight; use extra pull tabs on rain canopy

### Staying Warm In A Hammock

- Use the Pea Pod Sleeping Bag completely around the hammock to avoid crushing insulation on bottom!
  - Hide from cold wind behind ridges, hills, cliffs, etc.
- Use layering system (sleeping bag, sleep pad, clothes, blanket, jacket, vapor barrier bag, etc.)
  - Use sleeping bags and sleep pads as needed
    - Wear sleeping bag over you as a blanket
  - Use pile and/or fleece clothing, liner, or blanket
- Use light colored fabrics for reflection of radiant heat

- Wind/water proof hammock bottom for cold wind, then remove when warm temperatures return
- Use aluminized fabrics to block 97% of radiant heat loss, but watch for excessive condensation
  - Choose sleep pads greater than 22 wide
- Avoid extremely wide and thick sleep pads since they tend to buckle and create uncomfortable bulges
  - Use closed-cell foam pads (generally 1/4 to 5/8 thick)
  - Use foam-or down-filled inflatable sleep pads (generally 1 to 3 thick)
- Use aluminum-covered bubble wrap sleep pads (windshield sunscreens or Reflectix sheets cut to size)
- Watch for excessive condensation of body moisture with all sleep pads
- Switch to 1 thick sleep pad when temperatures drop below about 400F
  - Avoid slippery sleep pads that shift underneath you; inexpensive non-slippery foam pads are available
  - Wear all available clothing in sleeping bag; be careful with non-breathable fabrics
    - Use vapor barrier bag or liner inside sleeping bag
- Use Aluminized Mylar sheet (emergency or survival blankets) between hammock and Pea Pod Sleeping Bag (beware possible excessive condensation)
  - To avoid suffocation, never use vapor barrier over your face
- Wear rain/wind suit over underwear inside sleeping bag for make-shift vapor barrier bag
- Avoid all vapor barriers (including all waterproof/breathable fabrics) on the outside of sleeping bag since they will trap excessive body condensation
- Most good quality sleeping bags already have DWR treatments on outer fabric for effective wind blocking
- Do not wear all available clothing inside vapor barrier bag or everything will be soaked the next morning
  - If using a vapor barrier bag, have some dry clothing to put on in the morning
    - Vent your breath outside, not inside the sleeping bag
  - Air dry your sleeping bag as much as possible every day since body moisture accumulates in it every night
- Eat nutritious, easily-digested food for calories to burn for warmth
  - Eat just before going to bed; use sleep-robbing sugar or caffeine



sparingly

- Snack during the night for calories to burn for warmth
- Avoid dehydration by drinking lots of water day and night
- When the gear you have is not enough to keep you warm--try sleeping on the ground, returning to the comfort of the hammock as soon as warmer temperatures return

### Buying A Hammock

- Choose a solid fabric hammock for proper suspension, weight distribution, comfort and safety
  - Choose a hammock with bug net and rain canopy
- Choose a hammock with an extra large rain canopy for dependable, convenient and secure wilderness use
- Consider a hammock with a rain canopy large enough to offer storm protection when pitched as stand-up shelter
- Military-type jungle hammocks may lack the comfort necessary for long-term use
  - String net hammocks may lack long-term comfort
- Avoid hammocks with spreader bars if they raise the user too close to the tip-over point
  - Avoid or return any hammock that tips over or feels like it will
- Consider the weight of hammock, rain canopy and bug net; heavy units may be inappropriate for uses like long-distance hiking
  - Study the reviews in Chapter 7, How To Buy a Hammock
- Review manufactures literature including the Internet sites given in Chapter 7 and Appendix 3
- Some hammocks may come with rain canopies that lack guidelines or require additional waterproofing
- Remember, hammock comfort in general is dependent on length. Longer is more comfortable, so avoid short hammocks
- Choose a hammock with interior length at least 2 feet longer than your height for best comfort (stretched-cot type hammocks may not need this extra length)
  - For safety, choose a hammock suitable for your weight
- For serious wilderness use, consider a hammock that also conveniently sets up on the ground as a tarp and Bivy sack
- Consider a hammock with removable bug net for the increased-warmth use of a sleeping bag around the hammock
- Consider a removable bug net for using the hammock as a lounge chair

- Consider a removable bug net for weight savings during bug-free season
- Consider a removable rain canopy for improved views when not needed
  - Consider the actual usefulness of extra items like interior pockets, bottom pockets, interior pad retainers, wind shells, bottom entry, zippers, etc.
- Some extra features may be desirable for some uses, for instance car camping, cabin or backyard users may not be as concerned about weight and storm protection as long-term wilderness trekkers
- Hammocks for children may need extra material strength for safety

### Some Safety Do's and Don'ts

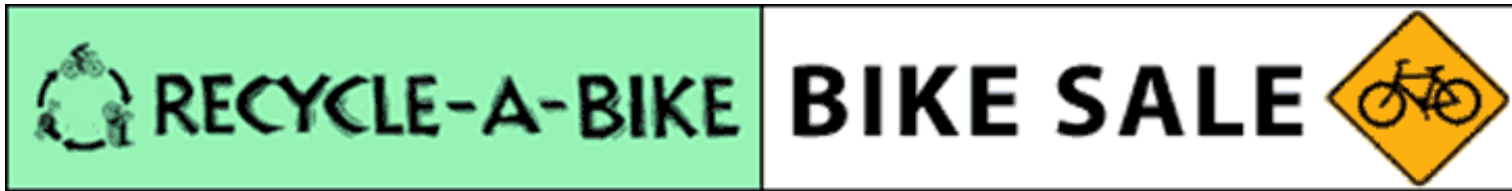
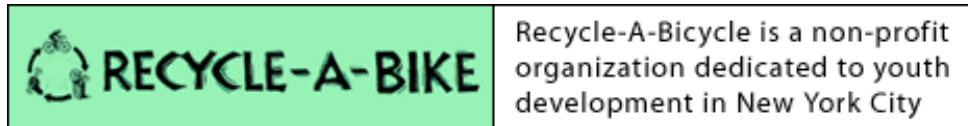
- Avoid falling out by staying low in the hammock
- Beware of spreader bars that raise the body to the tip-over point
  - Avoid catastrophic failure of the hammock materials
  - Inspect each hammock setup for incipient failure
    - Avoid or repair any damaged hammock
  - Repeatedly inspect hanging knots to avoid surprises
- Avoid tying to dead trees or other supports that could fail
- Avoid overhead dead branches or tree tops that could fall
  - Avoid overhead snow-covered branches
- Set up the hammock at waist height or lower to facilitate safe entry and exit
- Exercise caution getting in or out of hammock to avoid loss of balance
  - For better control when entering or exiting, hold the hammock with both hands, one on each side of the hammock
- Avoid sunlight as much as possible to prevent deterioration of nylon and polypropylene materials
  - Avoid tripping over the canopy guidelines
  - Avoid walking into the hammock tie-outs
- Avoid entanglements in the hammock materials
  - Wash the hammock and bug net as needed
  - Limit hammock use to one person at a time
    - Do not exceed the design weight limit
    - Do not swing in the hammock
  - Avoid sudden heavy movements in the hammock
- Avoid punctures, tears or rips to the hammock fabric

- Possible puncture problems exist inside the hammock from wristwatches, belt buckles, boots, shoes, eyeglasses, ear phones, portable radios, zippers on sleeping bag or clothes, writing pens, flashlights, etc.
- Avoid snagging the hammock fabric on brush, limbs, briars, rocks, etc. while making or breaking camp
  - Avoid open flames; the hammock materials are flammable
    - Do not smoke in the hammock
  - Restrict and supervise children's use of the hammock
    - Do not leave infants unattended in the hammock
- The physically handicapped may have difficulties in the hammock
- Use a whistle if you set up far from the traveled path but need to attract the attention of others for help
- Avoid contact with poisonous plants, including vines on trees; even dead plants/vines can cause problems
  - Do not completely enclose the Pea Pod Sleeping Bag; instead avoid suffocation and the buildup of excessive moisture in the insulation by leaving a large space for fresh air and the escape of your exhaled breath
- Avoid high-risk situations susceptible to storm dangers such as lightning, excessive winds or flooding



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## How to use an Axe



*The trend today is against use of axes in the backcountry. The argument is that they are more often used to deface green trees and injure people than to produce firewood. In truth, it is not the tool that is dangerous; it is the person who wields it.*

Outdoor experts value a good sharp axe. They know it is much simpler to produce fire after a week long rain if a splitting tool of some sort is available.

The correct use of tools can make everything proceed more smoothly. It is important that everyone understands how and why to use the tools

**They are tools, not toys.**

[\[What size axe?\]](#) [\[THE HANDAXE\]](#) [\[THE FELLING AXE\]](#)  
[\[USING AN AXE\]](#) *[To produce kindling]*  
[\[CARE\]](#) [\[Sharpening\]](#)

### What size axe?

Axes can come in different shapes and sizes, the two axes that are of most relevance to any camper will be the HANDAXE and the FELLING AXE.

These two axes are different in size and in use (as their names suggest).

### THE HANDAXE



Always make sure the head (*see diagram below*) of the axe is tight before use. Use proper wedging - wedges may be metal or wood.

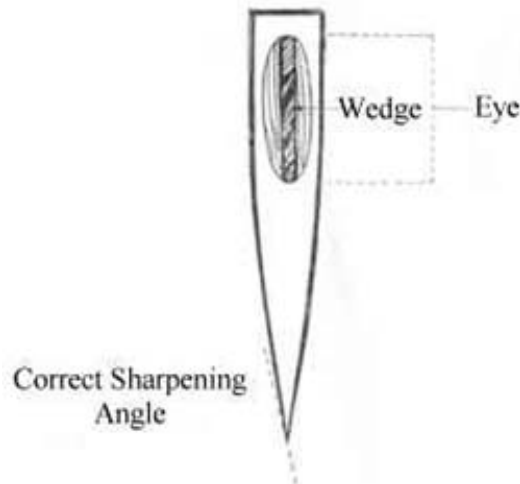
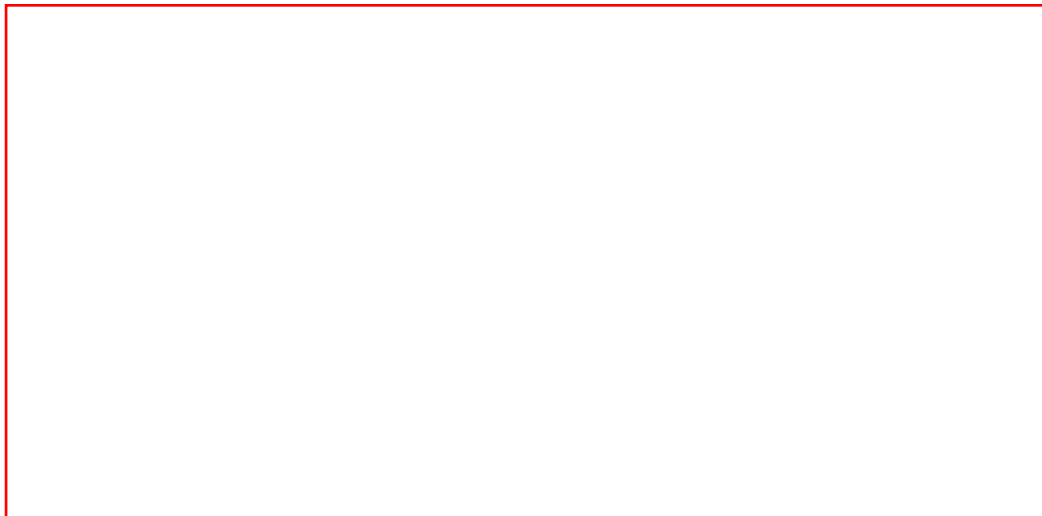
If the head becomes loose because the handle dries out, soak the wood in raw linseed oil.

For temporary swelling, soak in water.

An axe [haft](#) is usually made of hickory.

Never buy an axe haft with labels or paint on it - your hands will blister.

Always keep the haft clean



A properly used hand-axe is the safest of all edged tools; it is lighter and more

compact than a large axe, and when used in conjunction with a folding saw, it will produce all the camp wood you need with surprisingly little effort.

## THE FELLING AXE



There are two types of felling axe:

- i) The Rounding Axe
- ii) The Wedge Axe

The rounding axe is used on hardwoods. It will cut deep on hardwoods but will tend to become wedged if used upon softwoods. It is different in the fact that it has a thin tapering blade, and that it has a smaller shoulder than the Wedge axe.

The wedge axe is used for felling softwoods, and will not become wedged in the tree. Very hard dead branches will damage the bit of a rounding axe but not of a wedge axe. The wedge axe has a less tapered blade than the rounding axe. It also has a larger shoulder than the rounding axe.

## USING AN AXE

When using any axe boots (*preferably steel toed*) should ALWAYS be worn.

When using an axe a designated chopping area should be marked off. This should be in an area where there are few if any overhead branches.

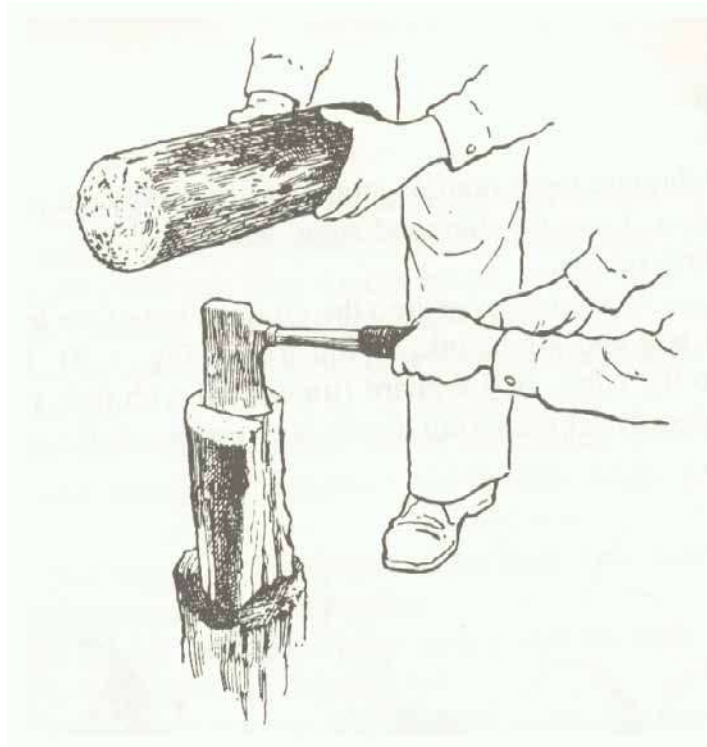
Spectators should always be kept at least two axe lengths away.

**Here are the rules for safe, efficient use of the hand axe:**

1. Saw wood to be split into 12 inch lengths.

2. Use the hand axe as a splitting wedge. Do not chop with it! The folding saw performs all cutting functions.

3. Set the axe head lightly into the end grain of the wood

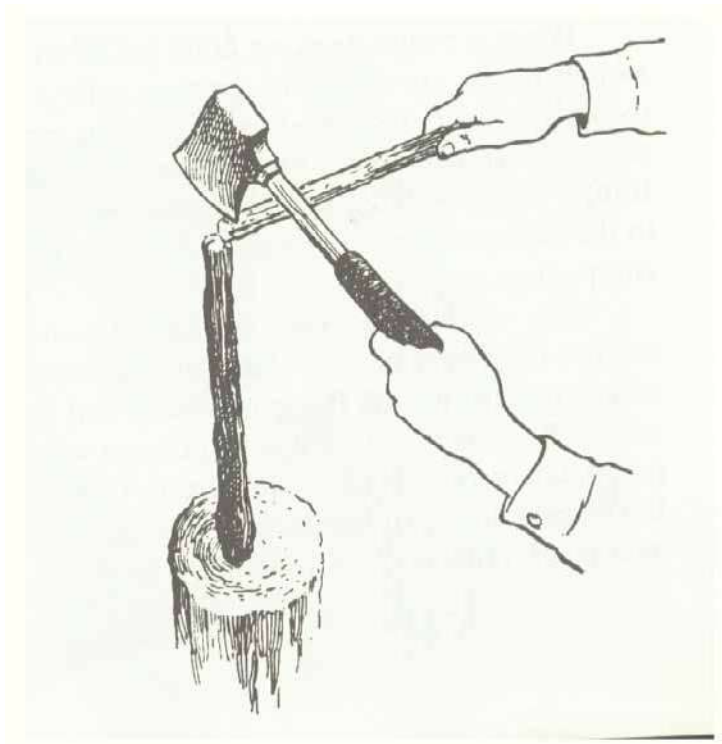


One person holds the tool while a friend pounds it through with a chunk of log. All-steel hand axes are better for this than those with wooden handles as they are less apt to break. When splitting very thick (over 6 inches) logs, take multiple splittings off the edges.

***Safety concerns:*** Hold the axe solidly with both hands. Allow the log hammer to do all the work.

***To produce kindling:***

Kindling splits easiest from the end grain, a process that's made easier and safer if you use a stick of wood to hold the upright in place



**NEVER** chop on the ground always use a chopping block, and aim at where the branch is supported by the block.

**NEVER** use the axe if you are tired, and stop using an axe if you become tired.

Irrelevant as to which axe you have been using, when finished with or not in use the axe should always be masked. This can be done with a leather (*or similar material*) cover, or by being left in a log.

When leaving it in a log make sure that the axe handle is never overhanging the length of the log.

When the axe has to be transported from one area to another, it should be masked (*obviously not within a log*) and should be carried so that the head is in your hand with the blade facing forwards and the toe facing towards the sky.

**NEVER** use an axe with a split [haft](#). Always replace a damaged haft with a new one - **NEVER** attempt to repair a [haft](#) however slight the damage.

## **CARE**

For day to day sharpening use a circular carborundum axe stone (wet or dry), making a rotary motion.

Keep your finger tips away from the blade.

### ***Proper Maintenance for Axe***



Keep the head greased when not in use and mask either in leather or canvas.

Always sharpen your axe before you put it away.

Keep the haft slightly oiled, preferably with raw linseed oil, when not in use. Do not put too much or else it will be slippery and sticky.

Make sure that the axe obtained is not painted as there maybe hidden cracks beneath the paint.

## **Sharpening**

An axe with a blunt edge becomes no more than an inefficient hammer, and indeed a great deal more dangerous as you struggle to use it.

Always keep your axe sharp.

### ***Carborundum Stone***

- Use a double-faced stone with both rough and smooth surface.
- First, use the rough surface to remove burrs, then the smoother side to get a fine edge. The objective is to obtain an edge that will last long.
- To sharpen the blade, hold the handle in the right hand. Use a clockwise circular motion and apply a steady pressure on the blade with the fingertips of the left hand as you push away.
  - Keep the angle constant as well as the stone wet.
- Never drag the blade towards you under pressure, as this will produce burrs. To obtain a finer edge, apply less pressure.
  - Work anti-clockwise for the other side.

### ***Grinding Stone***

- If grinding is necessary, use a soft, wet sandstone. The stone should be turned towards the bit, as it is more effective than turning the stone away from the bit.
- However, the latter method is undoubtedly safer and more practical for Scouts.
  - There must be a constant supply of water flowing over the stone.
- Grinding is done radially. That means working away from the center of the cheek towards the bit.
  - Effective grinding is inevitably a slow process.

### ***File***

- When using a file, adopt a method, which will be difficult to nick your own fingers.

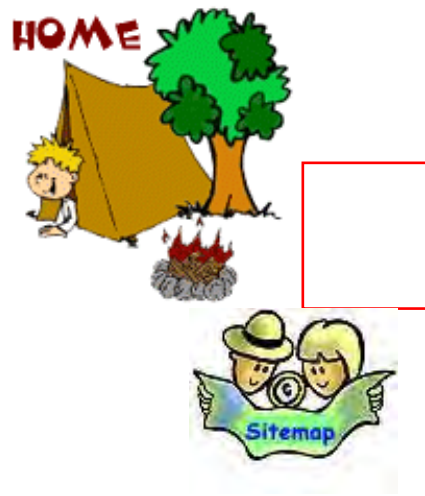
- For large 'burrs' a file is probably your best bet.
- Make sure you use the file correctly, it will only work in one direction, it works when pushed, not pulled.
- After filing, it will be essential to use the sharpening stone to put the finishing edge and to work out the file marks.

### **Remember:**

- 📌 When using a hand axe, always chop downwards and away from your own body.
  - 📌 Never attempt to cut unsupported wood.
  - 📌 Never chop onto or into the ground.
  - 📌 Keep spectators in front of you and at least six feet away.
    - 📌 **Never throw an axe.**
  - 📌 Never leave an axe lying on the ground or propped up against a log or tree.
    - 📌 If the axe head is loose, **stop using it.**
    - 📌 If you become tired while chopping, stop at once.
  - 📌 Learn to aim at a particular point on the stick or log you are chopping.
    - 📌 Keep your eyes on the place you are trying to chop.
      - 📌 Keep calm when chopping.
      - 📌 Do not be over confident or careless
  - 📌 If you are wearing a scarf or tie, ect. take it off before you start to use the axe. Anything in the way must be removed
  - 📌 Whenever you stop using the axe, mask it properly either by putting it in the carrying case or by masking in a block.

**Never attempt to repair an axe handle**

**Never use any axe that has a damaged or split handle.**



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RECYCLE-A-BIKE

BIKE SALE



## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING Coolers



There's an art to packing a cooler efficiently, but anyone can master the technique with a little practice. So, to begin, let's say the family is going camping for a few days, and there's no camp store nearby, so you'll be taking most all the food you'll need for the duration of the trip and you need to keep it cold so that it doesn't spoil.

How can you fill your ice cooler(s) so that the ice will last and you won't have to drive down the road to find more?

Most importantly, you need a quality ice chest for storage of perishables. Ideally, this should be a larger cooler with good insulation, including the lid, a drain plug, and an inside bin for those items you don't want sitting in melted ice.

An idea cooler: a 150 quart Coleman marine cooler, has a deep bin and two lids, with panel inserts to create compartments inside the cooler.



Can hold a block of ice to last in this "refrigerator" for over two weeks in 80° weather.

Also, take along a second, smaller cooler just for drinks, which keeps you from frequently opening the storage cooler.

**Basically, that's the main trick:**  
avoid opening the cooler as much as possible,  
particularly during the heat of the day, because that let's in warm air, which melts the ice.

**Here's some other tips to help prolong the ice:**

- pre-chill, or freeze, food and drinks
- put food in first, then cover with ice
- keep the cooler out of the sun

- make sure you close the lid tight
  - don't drain all the cold water
- keep meats/perishables directly on ice
  - avoid opening frequently
- Cover the ice in a picnic cooler with foil to help it last longer

## COMPANY ADDRESSES

Do you need an address or phone number for an outdoor gear company?

[Here is a listing of a contact information for some of the major gear companies.](#)



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Cooking at Camp

[Cooking at Camp](#) [Cooking On A Campfire](#) [How To Cook Over A Campfire](#)

[Dutch ovens are specially designed for camping](#) [baking of food in foil packets](#) [Clean up after yourself](#)

*Camping and outdoor cooking go hand in hand.  
Whipping up a meal at camp can be quick and easy.  
Always bring aluminum foil.*

- 🔴 When cooking at your campsite, make your meal menu simple and filling.
- 🔴 Write down the menu for all meals for your trip. This will help you pack all the ingredients you will need without forgetting a key ingredient.
- 🔴 Measure and combine dry ingredients into Ziploc bags prior to packing. Make sure you label the bag for the appropriate meal.
- 🔴 Do not assume that every campsite still has their grill or that it will suit your cooking needs.  
Plan to bring a grate to put over the fire.
- 🔴 Purchase a separate set of camping dishes and silverware, dishpan, washrag, towels, and soap.  
Store them in a plastic container that can be pulled out and ready to go for each camping trip.
- 🔴 Purchase a quality [camp stove](#)
- 🔴 Meals that can be cooked ahead of time at home and travel well in a cooler will save a lot of time especially on the first night of your trip.
- 🔴 Bring small amounts of cooking supplies instead of large quantities. It will save quite a bit of packing space.
- 🔴 DO NOT FORGET [aluminum foil](#) and marshmallows

## Cooking On A Campfire

Campfires can be used for cooking food by a number of techniques. Cooking food using a campfire can be tricky. Cooking over a campfire is more difficult than cooking with charcoal and many campers prefer to use a portable stove instead. The techniques for cooking on a campfire are no different than those used for everyday cooking before the invention of stoves or where stoves are still not available. Individuals who are backpacking in an area that allows the gathering of firewood may decide to cook on a campfire to avoid the need to carry extra equipment; however, most campfire cooking is done in front-country campgrounds.

A pot hanging over the fire, although picturesque, may spill, and the rigging may be difficult to construct from found wood.

Generally this is done with metal rigging, much of it identical to that used in home fireplaces before the invention of stoves. Two vertical iron bars with an iron cross-piece allow pots to be hung at various heights or over different temperatures of fire. Gridles, grills and skewers can also be hung over the fire.

However the best way to approach this technique would be to use a tripod bought from your local camping supply store.



## How To Cook Over A Campfire

### 1. The Fire

Use hard wood.

If you cook over a fire made from pine, fir, cedar, spruce or any of the other conifers, your cooked meat will taste like pitch. If you don't know how pitch tastes, bite a pine tree.

Most hardwoods -

oak, maple, alder, laurel, manzanita, mesquite, etc. will work fine.

Avoid using poison oak brush or known poisons such as oleanders. If you have a choice, the wood of the vine maple is the best there is. The theory is that the wood imparts a flavor to the meat. I suspect there are few tasters who could distinguish meat roasted over oak from meat roasted



over maple.

I will assure you, however, that you can identify meat cooked over a pine fire.

## 2. The Meat

The better the piece of meat, the better the results.

If you are faced with barbecuing a tough piece of meat and the required ingredients are at hand, you should marinate the meat for as long as you can. Only certain ingredients will act to tenderize meat. Red wine, lemon or lime juice and soy sauce are three of them. A cup of red wine, a cup of soy sauce and the juice of one lemon makes a good marinade.

And whatever spices strike your fancy.

Go easy on the salt as the soy sauce is near pure salt.

You can roast about any kind of meat there is over an open fire as long as the chunk of meat is big enough to stay on your roasting stick or barbecue grill.

Meat for barbecuing should have the fat trimmed off it.

If you don't trim the fat off, it will render grease which will drip on your cooking coals, burst into flame and burn your meat while giving it a strong flavor of burning grease.

## 3. The Cooking Process

The cooking process will vary according to the kind and shape of meat you are cooking. To tell whether the fire is the right temperature, hold your hand over the coals at the height your meat will be when cooking. Count: One thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand threeeee - and if it is too hot for you to say "one thousand four" before moving your hand, the coals are just right. Cook the meat without turning it until it begins to look shiny on the top. It will still be cool to the touch but is probably ready to turn. Look at the cooked side. It should be brown all over, a little crusty looking, but not burnt. After turning, continue cooking until the red juices come through the top of the meat. If you like your meat medium rare, it's done providing it was steak thickness to begin with.

**Dutch ovens are specially designed for camping.**

The oven is placed in a bed of hot coals, often from a keyhole fire with additional coals placed on top of the lid, which usually has a raised rim to keep the coals from falling off. Dutch ovens are made of cast iron, and are not suitable for backpacking. Dutch ovens are also convenient for cooking dishes that take a long time. They are the not the only option for baking on a campout as devices for baking on portable stoves exist and clay ovens can be constructed at longer encampments.

[Learn More about Cooking with a](#)

**Another technique is the baking of food in foil packets.**

Food is wrapped inside a durable packet of tin or aluminum foil, crimped to seal, and placed on or under hot coals. Baked potatoes are a common food cooked this way.

[Learn More about Cooking with](#)

## Clean up after yourself



Start dishwater heating when you start preparing the meal. Heat the water in a large pan with a lid. The lid will keep the heat in and help the water to heat faster. If at all possible, heat your water on a propane stove rather than a charcoal or wood fire. It is better for the environment.

Scrape all dishes, pots, etc. before putting them in your dishwater. Use a rubber spatula to get as much off your dishes as you can. This will increase the amount of time your water stays clean enough to use.

Set up a three dish pan cleaning station. The first pan gets hot soapy water. The hotter this water, the better the greasy dishes will come clean. The second pan gets warm to hot rinse water. Try to keep it free of suds so that you can use it longer. The third pan gets cool water and a disinfecting ingredient such as bleach. This eliminates any germs that were missed by the water not being hot enough. Air dry your dishes to eliminate the most germs - towels carry germs like you wouldn't believe!

As the wash water gets dirty, dump it through a strainer or a piece of cheesecloth to remove the solid waste. Throw away the waste and dump the water away from any campsite or trail. If you are camping where there are large animals, do not dispose of your water near your campsite.

I recommend doing the clean up of your cooking dishes while the food is cooking when possible. This saves overall cleanup time and gives campers something to do while waiting for the food to finish cooking.



# Fundamentals of Camping

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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING ALUMINUM FOIL AND ITS MANY USAGE

[The Fire](#) [Steaming](#) [Cooking Times](#) [kitchen in a pocket](#) [Meals in a Sealed Foil Packet](#)

***Aluminum foil has unlimited uses, but lining pots and pans will relieve the troubles of scrubbing hard-to-clean dishes. Foil can replace some cookware by becoming the container for baked foods. Meats and vegetables can be wrapped in foil then tossed in the coals for painless cooking and cleanup.***



Cover the ice in a picnic cooler with foil to help it last longer

## The fire

The best fire for foil cooking is one where there are plenty of embers and hot ashes. One of the problems is that hot ashes tend to get cool after a while therefore a [keyhole fire](#) solves that problem as it allows you to rake hot coals over your foil as it is cooking. A two inch bed of ashes is necessary for foil cooking.

## Steaming

Meat, fruit and vegetables can be cooked in foil using this method and a complete dinner can be put together and cook in one piece of foil. The food being cooked should be placed in the foil and wrapped up carefully sealing the edges by rolling them over. It is important to ensure that your package is airtight so that no air can escape. Turn your package over every few minutes to prevent burning of contains.

## Cooking time

Cooking time will depend on such factors as the size of the package and the heat of the coals; if necessary, peep into the package to see if it is done, but be sure to seal it up airtight again before replacing it in the coals. When cooking several things together, you must, of course, allow enough time for the slowest one to cook.

### **Some suggested foods and approximate times**

#### **Food Time (minutes)**

Mince beef	8 - 12
Sausage	5 - 10
Lamb chop	20 - 30
Fish (whole)	15 - 20
Fish (fillet)	10 - 15
Carrots (Sliced)	15 - 20
Potatoes (whole)	45 - 60
Potatoes (sliced)	10 - 15
Apples (whole)	20 - 30
Corn ear	6 - 10
Onion (sliced)	10 - 15

kitchen in a pocket

Aluminum foil is the outdoorsman's "kitchen in a pocket." Using foil allows the camp cook to dispense with carrying and cleaning heavy, bulky cookware. Stick a flattened roll in your pack or a folded sheet in your pocket and use it to cook a variety of foods, including fresh game and fish. Fashion it into a container for boiling water or heating condiments. Make it into a drinking cup or makeshift fry pan, or use it to reflect heat from your fire. Create a windbreak to start the fire, or line pots and pans to reduce cleanup time. Foil is inexpensive, readily available, convenient and easy to use.

## Meals in a Sealed Foil Packet

Among hunters and fishermen, foil is most often used to prepare sealed packets of food to cook on campfire coals or a campsite grill. Heavy-duty aluminum foil is preferred, because it is thicker and less likely to be punctured. If lightweight foil is all that's available, however, it can be used in double or triple thicknesses. Wrap the food so the duller side of the foil is on the outside.

One of the most important facets of foil cookery is sealing the food packets tightly in order to retain steam and juices, and, at the same time, to exclude dirt and ashes. This is accomplished by using a "drugstore" wrap.



*The classic drugstore wrap is an easy way to get food cooked and cut down on the mess.*

Tear off a piece of foil about twice as long as you want the completed food package to be. Lay the foil flat, place the food on top, and fold the foil in half so the food is between the folded pieces, near the fold. Then, beginning at the place where the two end edges meet, make a fold of about 1/2 inch and firmly press this, sealing the seam. Then fold the seam over two more times, 1/2 inch at a time, and press to seal. The two open ends are then sealed in the same manner, and the packet is ready for the cooking fire.

When cooking meats and fish, seal the packages so there is very little or no air space between the foil and the food. Close contact between food, foil and fire helps brown the food. In cooking vegetables or other foods, however, it may be preferable to "tent" the foil over the food. The extra air space allows the package to act somewhat like a pressure cooker, steaming the food until it is done without browning it. One or two tablespoons of water or liquid condiments added to each package enhance the flavor and produce a tenderer, moist meal.

When cooking directly in campfire coals, add a second foil wrap over the first. This creates a package that's less likely to get punctured, letting dirt in and steam and juices out. Also, when you remove the outer wrap, the inside package will still be clean, and the opened foil can be used as a plate or serving dish.

The manner in which you place the food packets in the fire depends on the heat of the fire and how fast or slow you want the foods to cook. If the coals are very hot, place the foil packs on top of a few coals, turning when half-cooked; or position them beside the coals and tilt the broad side of the packets toward the fire using sticks or rocks to prop them up. If the coals aren't too hot, you may want to bury the packets in coals so there's no need to turn them.

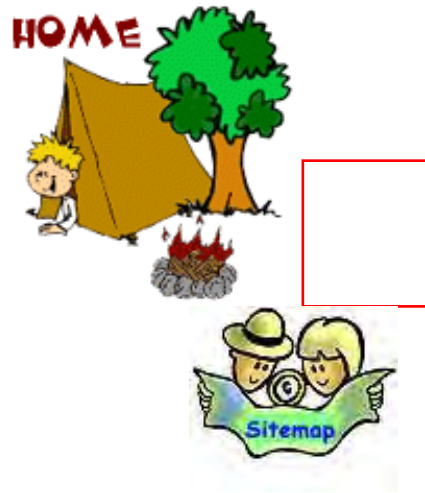
Barbecue tongs or a long stick can be used to turn foil packets in the coals so both sides cook evenly, and to remove the packets from the fire when they're done. The foil cools fairly quickly when removed from the coals, but a pair of cloth gloves may prevent a blister or two when opening the packages. To open the food, tear or cut off the folded ends or snip the top and pull open. Use care so that steam escaping from just-opened foil packs doesn't burn your face or hands.

Wonderful meals of fish are easy and very tasty.

When properly cooked in foil, fresh fish or game is a special treat.









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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## Avoiding Bears



For the most part, bears usually stay away from people. Some areas are more prone to bear problems due in large part to the overpopulation of tourists and abundance of food provided by them. Some California National Parks are particularly notorious for their brazen bear populations. Concentrated bear problems are sometimes posted so be very aware.



While camping in bear country you may encounter a bear.

[Camping Terminology](#)

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[Contact Us](#)

If you are planning a camping trip to bear country, a telephone call to inquire about bear activities is recommended.

If you confront a bear while in the outdoors, remain calm.  
**Don't panic!**

To reduce the chances of bear problems:

- 📌 Move to another campsite if fresh bear sign is present.
- 📌 Never have food in your tent.
- 📌 Use canned and dried foods to minimize food odors.
- 📌 Store foods out of a bear's reach.



- 📌 Use air-tight or bear-proof containers.



- 📌 Burn waste paper in your campfire.
- 📌 Remove all garbage and fish remains from camp every evening.

### **KEEP A CLEAN CAMP**

Bears have an excellent sense of smell and are attracted by food odors. Dirty dishes and garbage (especially bacon grease) may lure bears to your camp. Wash dishes immediately and dump the water away from camp (at least 150 feet away from any lakes or wetlands). Outside of the wilderness, leave your food in your vehicle, preferably in the trunk when you are sleeping or away from your campsite.

When possible, burn all food scraps, left-over grease and garbage. Nonburnable garbage should be hung up with the rest of your food and packed out when you leave. Don't dispose of food in the wilderness latrines. Bears will still find it and may destroy the latrine in the process.

🔪 LEAVE YOUR TENT OPEN WHEN YOU LEAVE YOUR CAMPSITE.

Bears are naturally curious and may want to look inside your tent. It's no problem for bears if the tent is closed tight . . . they'll just make their own opening

Seeing bears can be very enjoyable. However, having a bear in camp can lead to problems.

If a problem becomes serious, the bear may be killed unnecessarily.

If a bear comes into camp:

🔪 Don't feed it. Scare it away.

🔪 Make loud noises, bang pans, yell or use air horns.

🔪 Don't be gentle! Chase it away.

🔪 Throw rocks or pieces of firewood or use a slingshot.

**No nearer than 15 feet from the bear!**

If a bear makes threatening sounds, stands upright or bluff charges, you are too close. These actions can be unnerving, however, the bear can almost always be chased away.

Spray repellents containing capsaicin (hot pepper liquid) are available to discourage bold bears.



These repellents are effective and will not injure a bear's eyes or make the bear aggressive.

**CAUTION!**

Care must be taken when using these products.  
Be sure to follow label instructions.

A bear will take advantage of any foods available and will attempt to eat anything that resembles food in look, smell or taste. When natural foods such as nuts, meat berries, insects and tender vegetation are scarce, bears search actively for anything to eat. This is when bears most often come in contact with people. When bears find a source of food they will usually return regularly.

### **Bears and People**

Bears and people meet under a variety of circumstances. Most bears are wary of people and will usually leave when encountered. Although seeing a bear can be a memorable experience, some people are frightened when they encounter these animals.

Bears can become a nuisance when they visit homes, resorts, campgrounds and restaurants. Although some bears become used to people, they are still wild animals no matter how "tame" they may appear. People must always be cautious around bears since they may react unpredictably.

The best way to avoid bear problems is to not attract them in the first place.

### ***Contacts***

If you have persistent bear problems or want more information on bears, contact your local DNR Area Wildlife Manager for assistance.

### ***Black, Brown & Grizzly***

***Wilderness hikers often wear bells on their boots to warn nearby bears of their presence.***

***Try singing if you're on the move.***

***On the other hand, the bear is the noisiest critter in the woods (humans #2) so quietly listening works well too.***

***If you still find yourself face to face with a bear, back away slowly. Talk softly "nice bear" and keep your eyes down.***

***Leave a cooler or pack behind as you retreat as a distraction.***

***Under no circumstances should you run or scream. To the bear, a scream is a challenge to fight.***

*Do you really want to fight a bear?*

## **Just Remember . . .**

**Avoid all contact with bears**  
Never feed or approach bears.  
Don't try to get close for that perfect photo!

**Dogs can annoy bears**  
and bring them back to their owners.  
It's best to leave your dog at home or keep it on a  
leash.

## **Never**

**store food in tents.**  
Store all food in the trunk of your vehicle.

**Sleep at least 50 meters**  
from the area where you store and cook food.

Pitch your tent away from dense bush, lake shores,  
stream banks and animals' trails.

**Keep clothes and gear free of food odors**  
and dispose of dishwater at least 100 meters  
from your campsite.

**Do not cook strong-smelling or greasy foods.**  
Burn out tin cans after a meal if you have a fire.

**Keep your campsite clean.**  
Put all garbage in bear-proof containers or pack it  
out.

Never bury garbage -  
bears can dig it up.

**Clean fish in running water.**  
Dispose of fish entrails by burning them in a hot  
fire or dropping them in deep or rushing water  
after puncturing the air bladder.

**Don't use or pack**  
strong-smelling or herbal scented perfumes,  
deodorants, shampoos, etc.

**Don't surprise bears.**

Carry a bell, sing, talk or make noise along a trail to avoid startling bears.

Never hike alone, or after dark.

**Never come between a female bear and her cubs.**

Stay clear of occupied bear habitat, berry patches, avalanche chutes or streams with spawning salmon.

Leave an area the way you came if you see fresh signs of bears such as tracks, droppings or diggings.

**Be wary of hiking in high winds.**

A bear may not be able to pick up your scent and have time to move off before you come across it.

### **Citronella**

In response to a question about bears being attracted to citronella, in the February 2003 issue of Backpacker magazine the "bear expert" wrote about "several years" of research in "Alaska to test how bears respond to different sights, sounds and smells. Citronella powerfully attracts some male and female bears. For some individuals of both sexes, it elicits rolling and rubbing that can last for 5 to 10 minutes... We know of no attacks on people triggered by wearing citronella, but because of its bear attraction power we don't recommend wearing it in bear country."

There are Four Subspecies of Bear in North America.

They are:

1. [Black Bear](#) (*Ursus americanus*)
2. [Grizzly Bear](#) (*Ursus arctos horribilis*)
3. [Alaskan Brown Bear](#) (*Ursus arctos middendorffi*)
4. [Polar Bear](#) (*Ursus maritimus*)

### **Black Bear**



The black bear is the smallest of the North American bears, and the only one that is distinctly American.

The American black bear is a medium size bear, weighing between 130 and 660 pounds with a total body length of 50 to 75 inches. Though known to attack when provoked, the black generally gives humans a wide berth.

Though usually nocturnal, the Black Bear may be seen at any time, day or night. The Black Bear's walk may appear clumsy, but in its bounding trot it can reach speeds up to 30 mph. This bear is also a powerful swimmer and a well-known climber. It uses trees as a means of escape when in need of protection and the bear can also find food in the trees.

They can be seen at any time of the year if you happen to be in the right place at the right time. This bear is mainly solitary, except briefly during the mating season.

This bear does not have the prominent shoulder hump which characterizes the brown-grizzly.

Although normally black, it is quite common to see chocolate brown, cinnamon brown, gray, pale beige bears or pale blue (known as glacier bears) to white (known as Kermode bears).

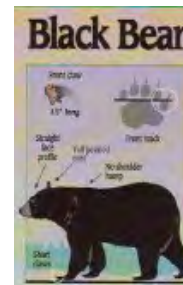
A typical black bear has long, lustrous jet-black hair over most of the body from its head down to its tiny tail. On its muzzle and around its eyes, the hair is light-colored. Most black bears have a splash of pure white on their chests. This splash may vary from just a few hairs to an area about a foot across.

In eastern North America, the Black Bear is almost completely black and in the western regions it's color ranges from black to a shiny golden cinnamon, and can even have a white blaze on its chest. In the northwestern region there are even individuals that are almost white!

**Habitat & Range:** In the West, these bears inhabit the forest and wooded mountains. In the East, they live in forests and swamps. The Black Bear is widespread across North America, ranging from Alaska all the way to Mexico, most being found in the Rocky Mountain states and California. In the East, they range from the New England states, through the Appalachian Mountains to Florida. The Black Bear can also be found in Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. The bear is territorial and occupies an area usually 8-10 square miles, although in less populated places they may range over 15 square miles.

American black bears are found in North America; in 32 states of the United States, all provinces and territories of Canada except Prince Edward Island, and northern Mexico.





## Grizzly and

## Alaskan Brown Bear

Unarguably the largest and most dangerous of North American big game, the Alaskan brown bear (*Ursus arctos middendorffi*) and the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) are recognized as separate species although mammologists generally agree they are one and the same animal. Bear experts admit they are unable to tell the animals apart and classify both under the Latin name *Ursus arctos*.

Alaskan brown bears are huge, formidable animals that may weigh as much as 1,500 pounds. On all fours the bears stand as much as four and one-half feet at the shoulder and may reach nine feet in length. Most big males weigh between 800 and 1,200 pounds with females averaging between 500 and 800 pounds. Standing erect, some brown bear boars tower over eight feet. Grizzlies are proportionately smaller animals standing three and one-half feet at the shoulder and weighing

up to 800 pounds. These bears average six to seven feet in length for males, less for females.

Both browns and grizzlies have dished-in facial profiles and obvious shoulder humps. Each comes in various colors from dark brown to blond. Hair is long and thick and grizzlies commonly have conspicuous silver-tipped guard hairs. Tails are stubby, shorter than the five wickedly curved claws on each forefoot; these are often three to four or more inches long. Claws on the bears' hind feet are considerably shorter. Each adult animal has 42 teeth including four prominent, curved canine teeth, 12 incisors, 16 premolars and 10 molars. Such weaponry, combined with awesome power and surprising speed-and the big animals' naturally aggressive nature-make the big bears a potentially dangerous adversary.

### **Polar Bear**

The Polar Bear (*Ursus maritimus*) is the true King of the North, reigning as undisputed ruler of the frigid waters and frozen wastelands at the top of the world.

Polar bears are huge, long-necked, pear-shaped animals with thick, whitish-yellow pelage that blends well in a world of ice and snow. An inches-thick layer of fat beneath the skin serves both as insulation and an energy source. Sloping heads appear small. Ears are short and situated below the crown of the skull. Eyes, nose, lips and claws are black. Adult bears stand four feet at the shoulder and are about eight feet in length. Males average about 1,000 pounds and females are typically smaller and lighter. There are reports of some polar bears weighing in excess of a ton.

Plantigrades, the long-legged bears walk on the entire soles of their feet. Pads are covered with short, insulating hair that also provides traction as the bears walk or run across the ice.

There are five toes on each foot and claws are sharp but relatively short. Polar bears walk with a distinctive shuffling gait and are surprisingly quick and agile for such large animals.

They can run at speeds over 30 miles per hour and swim tirelessly at speeds conservatively estimated at six miles per hour. The white bears have been sighted at sea swimming strongly more than 100 miles from the nearest landfall. The bears have a total of 42 teeth including four long canines, 12

incisors, 16 premolars and 10 molars.

## **Avoiding Bears**

*Tom Huggler*

Camping encounters with wildlife are the exception, not the rule. In a lifetime of sleeping outdoors, I have experienced perhaps a half-dozen incidents, all of which could have been avoided with the exception of a foraging grizzly bear in the arctic. I awakened one night to a rough panting outside our tiny tent. In a panic I found my .44 magnum handgun and ripped it from its holster. Holding a shaking penlight in my mouth, I sat up in my sleeping bag, the gun in both trembling hands, and waited for a certain attack.

Luckily, the bear was merely curious. Finding nothing to eat, he wandered off into the dark, but I was too shook up to sleep anymore that night.

Foraging bears are a constant threat to campers in the backcountry and in many of our national parks. The last time I visited Yellowstone, rangers drove throughout the campground each evening, warning people to put food away. In Glacier National Park a couple of years ago a black bear surprised my wife and me as we hiked along a trail back to our camp. The bruin, more interested in berries than in us, ambled off the path into the woods.

My arctic camping partner and I avoided a confrontation with that curious grizzly because we had taken certain precautions. We prepared and ate supper 50 yards from our tent. We washed dishes, stuffed empty food packaging into Zip-Loc bags, and made doubly certain that no food or food odors lingered in the area. Had trees been available, we would have suspended our mess kits and food supplies on a rope 15 feet above the ground and at least five feet from the tree trunk. We even changed clothes before climbing into our sleeping bags. That left nothing to smell except human beings, and when the bear got a whiff of us, he "woofed" and left camp in a hurry.

"A fed bear is a dead bear" say the posters in our Western national parks. A bear that is rewarded only once by finding food in a campground quickly loses its fear of people. That bear will have to be removed. If it becomes a problem, park

personnel will kill the animal.

Many government-run parks provide food lockers in modern campgrounds and food poles or cables in backcountry sites to keep chow away from bears. Auto campers are required to lock all food in the trunks of cars at night and to dispose of trash in bear-proof receptacles provided. Besides these precautions, there are many other things campers can do to avoid a confrontation with a bear.

- \* Don't hike alone or after dark, and whistle, sing or otherwise make loud noises when traveling through known bear country. A bear that hears you will nearly always move off the trail.
- \* If you see a cub, back off; never get between a cub and its mother.
- \* Stay as clean as possible, avoid scented shampoos and deodorants, and don't sleep in the clothes you wore all day and cooked in. Instead, hang them away from camp, along with your food.
- \* Remember that a tent affords more protection than sleeping in the open. Keep a flashlight and a noisemaker handy.
- \* Most importantly, don't provoke a bear by approaching the animal for photos or a better look. According to the National Park Service, if you run into a bear, avoid eye contact (which might be interpreted as a threat), talk softly and walk away, while dropping something that might distract the bear. A friend of mine, who lives in Alaska and was fishing the Russian River for sockeye salmon, avoided a certain confrontation with a young grizzly when my friend dropped his stringer of fish in the trail. All the bear wanted was something to eat.

If you are attacked and have no means of defense, however, the best advice--according to the NPS--is to drop to the ground, assume the fetal position so the knees will protect vital organs, cover your head with your arms, and play dead.

Bears are the largest potential threat to campers in North America.

**Most campers  
who use common sense  
never see one!**

**PEPPER SPRAY?**

ARTICLE ONE

[Click Here](#)

Please inform me if this link is no longer valid.  
*(As of April 21, 2004 it is)*

I say this, for some Websites or pages out there tend to vanish after a period of time.

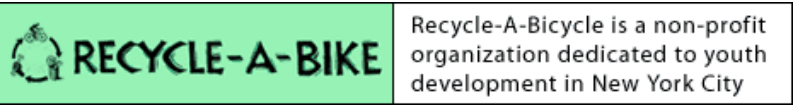



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## How to Identify Snakes



*Chances are, you'll see several lizards and snakes in the field. All will be interesting, most will be harmless, FEW will be venomous.*

*Though these animals can be very dangerous, NONE are to be feared unless YOU behave foolishly. You're smarter than they are, so act like it.*

People who frequent wild areas, as well as those who camp, hike, or live in snake-inhabited areas, should be aware of potential dangers posed by venomous snakes. A bite from one of these, in which the snake may inject varying degrees of toxic venom, should always be considered a medical emergency.

**Snakebites are quite rare, and even when they occur it is quite possible no venom will be injected.**

**Nonetheless, those camping in snake territory should familiarize themselves with modern treatments for snakebites and be prepared should an unfortunate incident take place.**

Things to know about snakes:

- Their habits.
- [How to identify the dangerous kinds.](#)
- [Precautions to take to prevent snakebite.](#)
- [What actions to take in case of snakebite](#)
- [Identify a poisonous snake of your region by sight](#)

## How to Identify Poisonous Snakes

There are many different poisonous snakes throughout the world.

It is unlikely you will see many except in a zoo.

In the contiguous United States there are only four venomous snakes to worry about. The most common is the rattlesnake; the other three are the copperhead, cottonmouth and the coral snake.

Poisonous snakes have two distinct features that differentiate them from non-poisonous snakes.

First,

One method of telling the difference between a venomous or poisonous snake versus a non-poisonous snake is to look at the shape of the pupil.

Non-poisonous snakes all have a round pupil (*in the center of the eye*) whereas all poisonous snakes have a vertical elliptical (*cat-like*) shaped pupil.

All pit-vipers (*poisonous*) also have a small hole (*pit*) between the nostril and the eye.

*Poisonous snakes have slits or cuts for eyes versus round eyes of non-poisonous snakes.*

Second,

poisonous snakes have a diamond shaped head that appears triangular in shape.

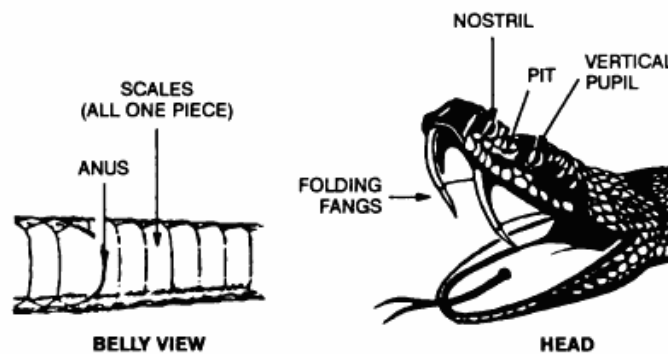
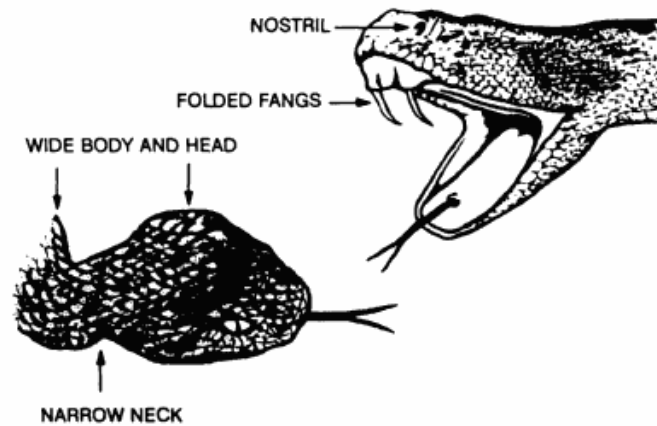
This page describes only a few poisonous snakes.

Snakes are typically non-aggressive-so if you encounter a snake, stop immediately and back away in a non-aggressive manner. When camping or hiking in areas where there may be poisonous snakes be sure to take along a snake bite kit. If you are hiking or camping where help is not close by it is wise to take along an antivenin serum to treat the type of poisonous snake located in your area.

You should, however, be able to spot a poisonous snake if you learn about the two groups of snakes and the families in which they fall

There are two families of poisonous snakes in North America. They are known as pit vipers and coral snakes.

**Pit vipers** include the copperhead, cottonmouth (*also called water moccasin*), and rattlesnake.



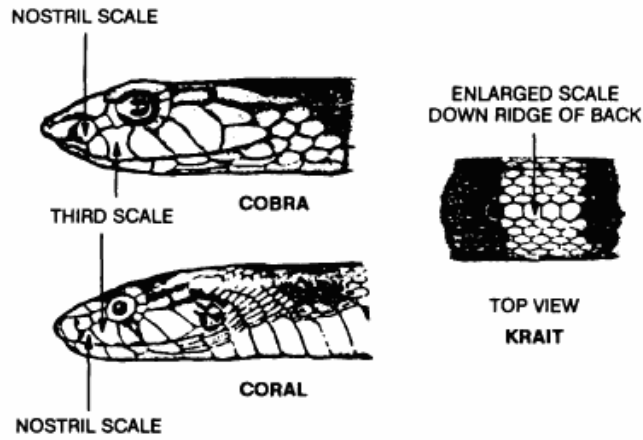
Pit vipers have long, moveable fangs, triangular heads, slit-like eyes, and a poison sac located behind the eyes. Cottonmouth and copperhead snakes live mainly in the southeast and south central United States. Rattlesnakes can be found throughout the country.

There are about 27 species of rattlesnakes in the United States and Mexico. They vary in color and may or may not have spots or blotches. Some are small while others, such as the diamondbacks, may grow to 2.5 meters long.

### **Coral snakes**

Any of various venomous snakes of the genus *Micrurus*, native to tropical America and the southern United States, characteristically having brilliant red, yellow, and black banded markings.





The Coral snake normally measures less than 24 inches and is brightly colored with red, black and yellow bands. It has a black nose, and there are no red rings on the tail portion of the body. The band of color in the coral snake is always in sequence of black, yellow, and red. The coral snake is a small, slender-bodied species and prefers damp areas, living about rotting logs, old lumber piles, leaf mod and piles of decaying vegetation.

The coral snake is likely the most gaudy of North American venomous snakes. This snake has a multitude of natural mimics which try to pose as the dangerous coral.

The beauty of this snake represents a true danger as small children may readily pick it up to show parents, thus providing ample opportunity for a bite from this otherwise rather docile reptile.

The snake is classed with several Old World species like the neurotoxic cobras, kraits, and mambas.

Typically very small by comparison, averaging only 20 inches or so, this snake is seldom seen and tends to be very nocturnal.

The snake spends much of its life underground in cracks and crevices.

Some nonpoisonous snakes also look like coral snakes.

Remember this verse,

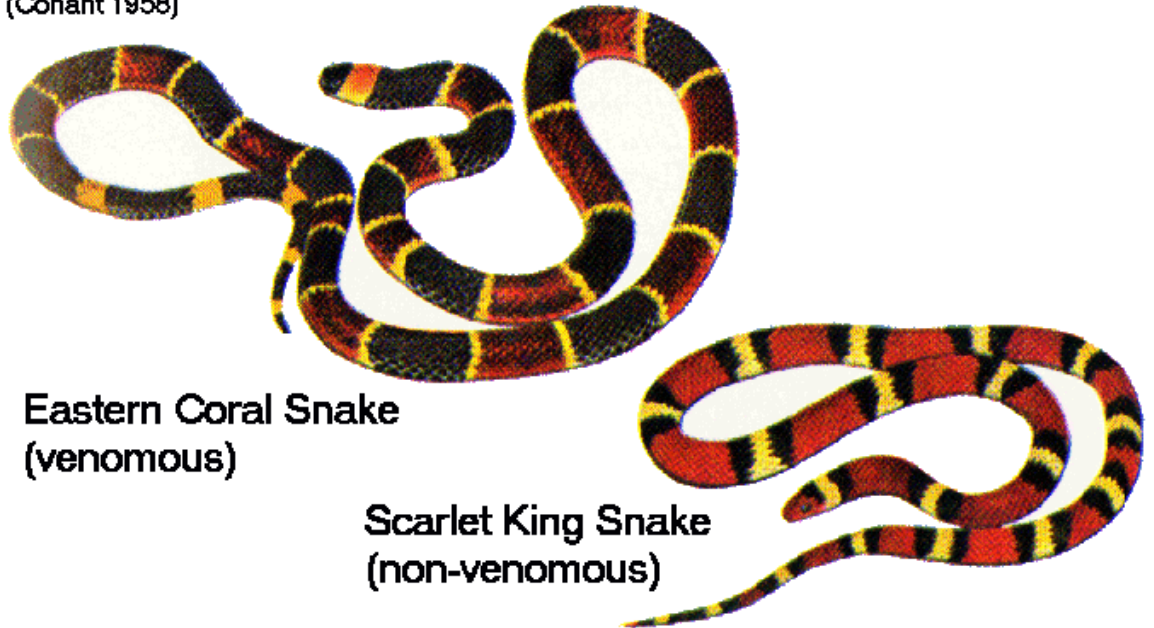
*"Red against black does venom lack,  
red against yellow kills a fellow."*

*or*

*"Red on black, friend to Jack."*

*"Red on yellow, kill a fellow."*

(Conant 1958)



**Eastern Coral Snake  
(venomous)**

**Scarlet King Snake  
(non-venomous)**

The Cottonmouth moccasin is always found near water such as stream banks, river swamps and lake margins. The color pattern of the body is variable and may be olive, brownish or blackish. The body is stout for the length, the tail abruptly tapers, the broad head is much wider than the neck, and the mouth has a whitish interior lining -- hence the name "cottonmouth."

Coral snakes are found mainly in the southeastern United States.

## **Symptoms**

The signs of a bite vary with the type of snake. A bite from a pit viper looks like a puncture mark. Immediate pain, burning, redness, and swelling occur within a few minutes. Nausea and vomiting, weakness, increased saliva, and possible seizures may also occur.

Symptoms from a coral snake bite may not appear until up to 12 hours after the bite. The bites appear like tiny scratches

in a semicircle. Blurred vision, drowsiness, slurred speech, weakness, increased saliva, and sometimes seizures occur after a bite from a coral snake.

Snakebites from poisonous snakes are rarely fatal when medical assistance is quickly provided. However, anyone bitten by a poisonous snake needs immediate medical attention. Remember what the snake looked like so you can describe it to the doctors who treat you.

- Fang marks that are often little more than a small scratch or abrasion but may be actual punctures
- There may NOT be two fang marks present at the bite site -- often, only one fang makes contact
- Swelling and pain at the wound site
- Continued oozing at the wound site
- Weakness, dizziness, or faintness
- Minty, metallic, or rubber taste in mouth and lips
- Sweating and/or chills
- Thirst
- Nausea and vomiting
- Numbness and tingling around the face and head (a classic symptom)
- Diarrhea
- Rapid heartbeat and low blood pressure
- Bloody urine and gastrointestinal hemorrhage (late stages)
- Bruising
- Dead tissue around the wound
- Shallow respirations, progressing to respiratory failure

## Prevention

*Snakes strike only when frightened or trapped.*

Snakes are widely distributed. They are found in all tropical, subtropical, and most temperate regions. Some species of snakes have specialized glands that contain a toxic venom and long hollow fangs to inject their venom.

Although venomous snakes use their venom to secure food, they also use it for self-defense. Human accidents occur when you don't see or hear the snake, when you step on them, or when you walk too close to them.

## WAYS TO AVOID SNAKEBITE

Follow these simple rules to reduce the chance of accidental snakebite:

- 📌 Be cautious when in snake territory. Be especially careful around water.
- 📌 Don't sleep next to brush, tall grass, large boulders, or trees. They provide hiding places for snakes. Place your sleeping bag in a clearing. Use mosquito netting tucked well under the bag. This netting should provide a good barrier.
- 📌 When hiking, wear long pants and boots to protect your feet and ankles.
  - 📌 Hike with a companion.
- 📌 Walk on clear paths and carry a walking stick.
- 📌 Don't step over a fallen tree. Step on the log and look to see if there is a snake resting on the other side.
- 📌 Don't walk through heavy brush or tall grass without looking down. Look where you are walking.
- 📌 Use a flashlight and wear boots at night. Snakes are more active in the cool of the evening.
- 📌 Don't put your hands into dark places, such as rock crevices, heavy brush, or hollow logs, without first investigating.  
***Be cautious when looking.***
- 📌 Stop walking if you see a snake. Quickly move away, at least 20 feet back along the path you just walked. Watch for other snakes in the same area.
  - 📌 Don't pick up any snake unless **you are absolutely positive** it is not venomous.  
(I would still advise to leave them be!!!!)

📌 Don't pick up freshly killed snakes without first severing the head. The nervous system may still be active and a dead snake can deliver a bite.

## First Aid for Snakebites

📌 **Don't panic!** Venom will spread more rapidly through the body if the person runs or becomes excited. Before giving first aid, identify the snake. Do not use ice on the bite; it can cause serious tissue damage.

Many people who "died from a snakebite" actually died from something reckless they did while in a panicked state after being bit.

*Many snake bite victims have run around carelessly only to stumble over a cliff, suffered heat stroke and died while trying to hike out in a rush, or they crashed their car while needlessly speeding to a hospital.*

*Usually, the victim of a poison reptile bite will have several hours before severe complications set in.*

📌 Know how to treat a poisonous bite. It is recommended that you always carry a snakebite kit, however, recent studies suggest these may only be moderately effective against pit viper bites.



Nonetheless, a snakebite kit such as the Sawyer Extractor™ is reportedly useful for sucking out some of the venom. It also comes with a complete list of instructions for treating a variety of other poisonous bites such as spiders, scorpions,

bees and wasps, etc.

- 📍 If the bite involves a coral snake, raise the bitten area and don't move it, then go to the nearest emergency facility.
- 📍 If the bite involves a poisonous snake that is not a coral snake, within 30 minutes place a light tourniquet (tight band of any sort) 3 to 4 inches above the bite, between the bite and torso (middle of the body). Do not cut off the circulation. You should be able to slip a finger beneath the band.
- 📍 Avoid moving the bitten area and don't consume alcohol or stimulants.
- 📍 For a nonpoisonous snakebite, keep the bite below the level of the heart. Clean the area thoroughly with soap and water, and place a bandage over the wound. Seek medical help promptly.
- 📍 Seek medical attention for snake antivenom.
- 📍 Get tetanus booster.

### General Do's

1. Remove everyone from risk.
2. Calm the patient. This is far more important than you may think! Nearly all snakebites are successfully treated in the US. Most poisonous snake bites are not fatal. Panic only increases danger to the victim by increasing heart rate, and it spurs carelessness among everyone.
3. Use your snakebite kit immediately. The first few minutes are the most effective for venom removal. Follow the instructions provided in the kit.
4. Seek medical help at once. Recent studies indicate the single most effective thing you can do is calmly transport the victim to a medical facility. In most cases, severe complications DO NOT occur until several hours after the bite. If you're deep in the

wild, make wise use of your time, but don't rush.

5. Remove tight watches, sleeves, jewelry, etc. Cut these items off if you have to. Note that rings and bracelets are especially hazardous as they will severely restrict blood flow to their particular extremity once swelling begins. Amputation is a likely outcome if these items are not removed.

6. While enroute to a hospital, apply a loose yet constricting band between the bite and the heart. This is NOT a tourniquet and should not be any tighter than a semi-tight watch band.

7. Keep the patient still if possible and immobilize the injured limb with a splint.

8. Treat the site like a puncture wound. If possible, wash the wound with copious amounts of soap and water. Once at the hospital, a doctor will likely give you a tetanus shot in addition to other treatments.

9. Keep the affected extremity at heart level or lower.

10. Limit liquid intake because the body will pump fluids to the bite site thereby increasing painful swelling. Also, avoid alcohol. It only increases metabolism and impairs judgment

### General Don'ts

**1. DO NOT GIVE ANTIVENIN IN THE FIELD!** Many snakebite victims experience allergic reactions to antivenin and this potential requires that the person giving the antivenin must be ready and able to provide advanced heart and lung support -- something only available at a hospital via trained medical personnel, sophisticated machines and powerful drugs. Further, five to twelve vials

are often needed to treat one bite. More drawbacks come into play when the detrimental effects of heat and agitation (due to carrying the vials in a backpack) are considered.

2. Don't kill the snake! It was only defending itself and such an attempt may produce another bite.

3. Don't try to capture the snake -- it's not necessary. There are only two types of venom -- neurotoxin and hemotoxin (antivenin for pit viper bites is the same for all species). Based on the geographic area, a doctor will usually know which type of antivenin to use.

4. **NEVER** cut an "X" at the bite site. This is ineffective and increases trauma in the area of the wound.

5. **NEVER** suck out venom with the mouth. The person sucking poison from the wound with his/her mouth will absorb the poison through his/her gums the same way a person absorbs nicotine from chewing tobacco. Further, the human mouth carries at least 42 species of pathogen† and this action could give the snakebite victim a major infection.

6. Don't excite the victim or allow him/her to walk if avoidable. Doing so will increase venom circulation.

7. Never apply a tourniquet, constricting band, or "Australian Wrap," unless you are well-trained in its use. As with snakebite kits, recent studies suggest this is of no help and even detrimental. (If, for some reason you do apply one, write a capital T (for tourniquet) on the victim's forehead AND the TIME you applied it. Relax it for 1 minute every 15 minutes.)

8. Do not apply ice, a cold pack, or freon



spray to the wound. This does not retard the spread of venom.

9. Never apply electrical stimulation from any device in an attempt to retard or reverse venom spread. Studies show this does NOT retard or reverse the spread of venom.

*Auerbach, Paul S. editor. 1995. Wilderness Medicine -- Management of Wilderness and Environmental Emergencies. 3rd ed. St. Louis: Mosby. p 700*

*Forgey, William W. 1999. Wilderness First Aid Manual. Seattle: HART Health and Safety. p 43-44*

The best way to be able to identify a poisonous snake is to know all of the venomous snakes of your region by sight. Color and patterns are distinctive and easily learned.

## Poisonous Reptiles Listed by State

*Click on a snake name to see a photo.*

### State            Poisonous Snakes *and Lizards* Found There

<b>ALABAMA</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Diamondback</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Pigmy rattlers</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Coral</a>
<b>ALASKA</b>	Reportedly, none.
<b>ARIZONA</b>	<a href="#">Western Coral</a> , <a href="#">11 species of rattlesnake</a> , <a href="#">Gila Monster</a>
<b>ARKANSAS</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">various rattlesnakes</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Coral</a>
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>	<a href="#">Sidewinder</a> , <a href="#">Mohave</a> , <a href="#">Speckled</a> , <a href="#">Western Diamondback</a> , <a href="#">Lower California</a> , and <a href="#">Western rattlers</a> , <a href="#">Gila Monster</a>
<b>COLORADO</b>	<a href="#">Western</a> and <a href="#">Massasauga rattlers</a>
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Timber Rattlesnake</a>
<b>DELAWARE</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a>
<b>FLORIDA</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Diamondback</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Pigmy rattlers</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Coral</a>
<b>GEORGIA</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Diamondback</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Pigmy rattlers</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Coral</a>
<b>HAWAII</b>	<a href="#">Sea Snake</a>
<b>IDAHO</b>	<a href="#">Various rattlesnakes</a> including <a href="#">Western Rattlesnake</a>
<b>ILLINOIS</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Massasauga rattlers</a>
<b>INDIANA</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Massasauga rattlers</a>
<b>IOWA</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">various rattlesnakes</a>
<b>KANSAS</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">various rattlesnakes</a>
<b>KENTUCKY</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Pigmy rattlers</a>
<b>LOUISIANA</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Diamondback</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Pigmy rattlers</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Coral</a>
<b>MAINE</b>	Reportedly, none.
<b>MARYLAND</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Timber Rattlesnake</a>
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Timber Rattlesnake</a>
<b>MICHIGAN</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Timber Rattlesnake</a>
<b>MINNESOTA</b>	<a href="#">Massasauga Rattlesnake</a>
<b>MISSISSIPPI</b>	<a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Massasauga rattlers</a>
<b>MISSOURI</b>	<a href="#">Copperhead</a> , <a href="#">Cottonmouth</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Diamondback</a> , <a href="#">Timber</a> and <a href="#">Pigmy rattlers</a> , <a href="#">Eastern Coral</a>

- MONTANA** [Copperhead](#), [Cottonmouth](#), [Timber](#), [Massasauga](#) and [Pigmy](#) rattlers
- NEBRASKA** [Western Rattlesnake](#)
- NEVADA** [Copperhead](#), [Prairie](#), [Timber](#), [Massasauga](#), and [Western](#) rattlers
- NEW HAMPSHIRE** [Sidewinder](#), [Mohave](#), [Speckled](#), [Western Diamondback](#) and [Great Basin](#) rattlers, [Gila](#)
- NEW JERSEY** [Monster](#)
- NEW MEXICO** Reportedly, none.
- NEW YORK** [Copperhead](#), [Timber Rattlesnake](#)
- NORTH CAROLINA** [Western Coral](#), [7 species of rattlesnake](#), [Gila Monster](#)
- NORTH DAKOTA** [Copperhead](#), [Timber](#) and [Massasauga](#) rattlers
- OHIO** [Copperhead](#), [Cottonmouth](#), [Eastern Diamondback](#), [Timber](#) and [Pigmy](#) rattlers, [Eastern Coral](#)
- OKLAHOMA** [Prairie Rattlesnake](#)
- OREGON** [Copperhead](#), [Timber](#) and [Massasauga](#) rattlers
- PENNSYLVANIA** [Copperhead](#), [Cottonmouth](#), and [various rattlesnakes](#)
- RHODE ISLAND** [Western Rattlesnake](#)
- SOUTH CAROLINA** [Copperhead](#), [Timber](#) and [Massasauga](#) rattlers
- SOUTH DAKOTA** [Copperhead](#), [Timber](#) and [Massasauga](#) rattlers
- TENNESSEE** [Copperhead](#)
- TEXAS** [Copperhead](#), [Cottonmouth](#), [Eastern Diamondback](#), [Timber](#) and [Pigmy](#) rattlers, [Eastern Coral](#)
- UTAH** [Prairie Rattlesnake](#)
- VERMONT** [Copperhead](#), [Cottonmouth](#), [Eastern Diamondback](#), and [Timber Rattlesnake](#)
- VIRGINIA** [Copperhead](#), [Cottonmouth](#), [various rattlesnakes](#), [Western Coral\(?\)](#), [Eastern Coral\(?\)](#)
- WASHINGTON** [Various rattlesnakes](#), [Gila Monster](#)
- WEST VIRGINIA** Reportedly, none.
- WISCONSIN** [Copperhead](#), [Timber Rattlesnake](#)
- WYOMING** [Western Rattlesnake](#)
- [Copperhead](#), [Timber Rattlesnake](#)
- [Timber](#) and [Massasauga](#) rattlers
- [Various rattlesnakes](#)



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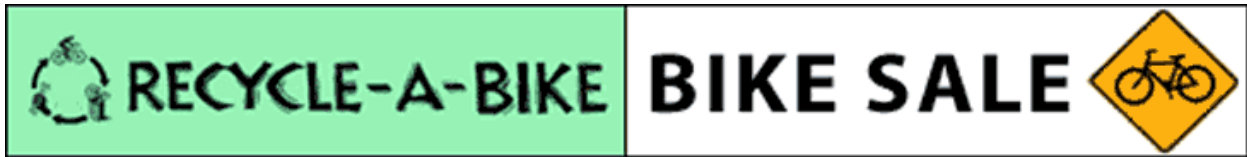
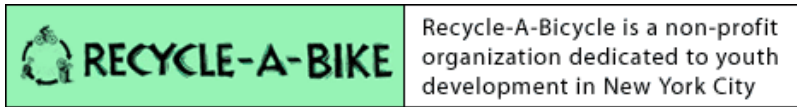
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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING Poison Ivy and other annoying plants

### INTRO

Things That Say "Keep Away!"

*those with thorns or stickers*

Touch-Me-Not

*poison ivy, poison oak, nettles and poison sumac*

Please Don't Eat The Berries

Heading Off Trouble

10 Rules For Safe Camping With Hazardous Plants

List of Some Poisonous Plants

**Many plants, both wild and cultivated-  
can cause all kinds of grief.  
Some will induce illness or kill when eaten,  
others give off toxic smoke when burned.  
Some irritate skin,  
and still others can inflict a nasty puncture wound.**

Although anyone who ventures out of doors is at some risk of encountering hazardous plants, which risk increases when time is spent in the woods. And when camping, which usually occurs during the warmer months when plants are green and growing, there's likely to be a run-in with some of Mother Nature's bad boys.

Campers need to remember that each region of the country has its own hazardous plants.

If you go from Florida to Michigan or to California, you have a whole different set of actors.

You can be an expert on the plants in your area, but if you go somewhere else, all your knowledge and experience won't help you. So even though you may be an experienced camper, going into a new environment means a whole new set of

risks.

## **It's all in the name of protection**

Why do plants have thorns, stickers, irritating sap or poisonous berries?  
It's all in the name of protection.

Plants have lots of good nutrients in them, so they defend themselves against being eaten or damaged. Plants can't run away. If they don't defend themselves some way, like by growing real tall like a tree or by having thorns, they'll become extinct in short order. So most plants, including a lot of food plants in the raw stage, anyway, have lots of defensive chemicals in them."

Plants' defense mechanisms can be divided into three types  
*(with some overlap):*

thorns and other physical means to keep critters away;  
chemicals that cause skin irritation of some kind;  
and  
toxins that cause illness or death if you eat them.

## **Things That Say "Keep Away!"**

The least malevolent group of plants you'll run into is those with thorns or stickers. Although most encounters with this group of plants result in nothing more than scratches, there's still the potential for more serious problems.

"A puncture wound is a puncture wound, it's a way for bacteria to get in, or there's a possibility you can get tetanus. A puncture with a thorn can push bacteria into the body where the body's not ready for it."

The most obvious category of plants that can cause puncture wounds is cactuses. Others include blackberries and related species. Then there are grasses with thorny seeds, and a variety of vines and other plants with stickers or thorns.

About the only thing you can do to protect yourself against these plants is to wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, as well as a good pair of walking shoes or light hiking boots.

Then be aware of your surroundings, and be careful where you walk. If you do get a puncture wound of some kind, get the thorn out, make sure the area is clean, and keep an eye on it. If you notice the area getting red and infected, visit your doctor before an abscess sets in.

## Touch- Me- Not

The most obvious culprits in this category are poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac.

Although those three are the major players, they certainly aren't the only plants that can cause some kind of skin irritation.



Some people develop contact dermatitis from Virginia creeper, a vine that's common in woodland camping areas all over the eastern U.S.

Other people can develop a rash from touching the white sap of milkweed.

Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac bother about eighty percent of the population. What actually happens is that the toxin in poison ivy, an oil called urushiol, binds the protein in the skin, and your body reacts to that combination of protein and oil."

Many other plants can cause a contact irritation of some kind, including parsnip and celery. An exotic weed, Giant Hogweed, can cause a severe skin rash for people who are sensitive to it.

Giant Hogweed looks like wild parsnip but it's enormous. It's about 10 feet tall and looks like something out of a dinosaur movie. That stuff really rips you up.

The danger from these plants goes beyond what happens when you touch them.

When you start a campfire, if you happen to grab dried leaves from some of these plants for tinder, or burn vines or branches from them, you can be setting yourself up for some serious problems.

### **Burning these plants can be very dangerous!**

The oil can be carried on smoke particles, and smoke particles can be inhaled or can reach different parts of the body. People get really sick that way. Another, less obvious way to have trouble is to handle someone's clothing after they've been in contact with one of these plants, or pet the dog after he's rolled in them, or otherwise have secondary contact with the plant oils.

The good news is that for most people, there are ways to prevent problems.

When you get out in the woods around your campsite, wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt to protect your skin. Then if you realize you've had contact

with one of these bad actors, you can solve the problem with soap and water. By washing well within 15 or 20 minutes, most of the time you'll get the plant oils off before you start to develop a rash.

***Do NOT scratch!***

*No matter how bad it gets, if you scratch, it's only going to get worse. After you get all washed up, then you're safe, but until then, anytime you touch it, and then touch somewhere or someone else, you're going to spread it. So, wash your hands, wash the area where you were exposed, and then remember to wash your hands again!*

Also, women shouldn't shave their legs before they go out. When you do, you don't have that dead skin layer to wash off.

A couple of common beliefs about poison ivy are untrue. Once you've washed the oil off, you can't spread the rash around on your body.

It just seems that way because sometimes one part of the body reacts more slowly than other parts, so it seems to spread. Also, occasionally people get secondary infections, and it's theoretically possible that you can spread that from one place to another. But the poison ivy rash itself is not contagious."

No discussion of irritating plants would be complete without a mention of nettle. This little plant can cause an instantaneous and nasty burning sensation when you brush against it.

Nettles have microscopic cells that shoot tiny needles out. They inject histamine that causes a nasty rash. Fortunately, it only lasts about 20 minutes of so. It just feels awful until it wears off. In extreme cases, taking an antihistamine will help.

**poison ivy, poison oak, and nettles**

***Leaves of three, let them be...***

Obnoxious plants, indeed!

The best prevention is to learn to identify these plants, then avoid any contact.

Should you touch one of these plants, do not scratch, and wash the area in cold water. Should you develop a rash, use a topical solution like calamine lotion.

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved the first drug that protects people against poison ivy rash. The new drug, called bentoquatam, also shields against related plants, such as poison oak, and is expected to be available in 1997.

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The small oak leaves grow in set of three on a stem. If you're not sure, then stay away from it anyway, just to err on the side of caution.

**POISON OAK**- It can make your best campout or day hike turn into a total nightmare. You really gotta know what this stuff looks like in both colors & stay away from it. Spring is bright green, late summer is

starting to turn red & slightly brownish-orangish. Hike in pants of you think you may be coming in contact with it on overgrown trails.



growing wild all over California under 5000' elevation  
can spread from you clothes to your body with indirect contamination  
do not burn the plant (*leaves or vines*) for any reason  
poison ivy is not found on the west coast  
Do not put your hands near your eyes, it spreads easily.

Watch out for this seemingly harmless little vine or shrub in the woods.  
Note the three-part leaves with jagged edges . . .





Notice also the color and configuration of Poison Ivy berries . . .



## Myths vs. Facts

### Myth

Poison Ivy rash is contagious.

### Fact

Rubbing the rashes won't spread poison ivy to other parts of your body (or to another person). You spread

the rash only if urushiol oil -- the sticky, resinlike substance that causes the rash -- has been left on your hands.

### **Myth**

You can catch poison ivy simply by being near the plants

### **Fact**

Direct contact is needed to release urushiol oil. Stay away from forest fires, direct burning, or anything else that can cause the oil to become airborne such as a lawnmower, trimmer, etc.

### **Myth**

Leaves of three, let them be

### **Fact**

Poison sumac has 7 to 13 leaves on a branch, although poison ivy and oak have 3 leaves per cluster.

### **Myth**

Do not worry about dead plants

### **Fact**

Urushiol oil stays active on any surface, including dead plants, for up to 5 years.

### **Myth**

**Breaking the blisters releases urushiol oil that can spread**

### **Fact**

Not true. But your wounds can become infected and you may make the scarring worse. In very extreme cases, excessive fluid may need to be withdrawn by a doctor.

### **Myth**

I've been in poison ivy many times and never broken out. I'm immune.

### **Fact**

Not necessarily true. Upwards of 90% of people are allergic to urushiol oil, it's a matter of time and exposure. The more times you are exposed to urushiol, the more likely it is that you will break out with an allergic rash. For the first time sufferer, it generally takes longer for the rash to show up - generally in 7 to 10 days.

**Please Don't Eat the Daisies . . .  
or The Berries**

Poisonous plants fall into several categories, each with different characteristics. Some plants can cause problems if eaten; others, if touched. Plants like poison ivy and other indoor and outdoor plants can cause a contact dermatitis. Certain plants can cause swelling internally; others will affect the heart and vital organs. Plants like cacti can be dangerous simply because of their physical characteristics (their spines).

The best rule of thumb when you're camping:  
Don't eat anything you don't absolutely know.

And even when you think you know something, question your knowledge, especially when you're in an area with which you're unfamiliar.

Don't be out there wild-crafting. Don't pretend you know what an edible plant is if you don't. And don't think that just because a plant looks like an edible plant that it is, especially if you don't know the botany of a particular area.

A lot of plants look kind of alike. Wild carrot, parsnip, poison hemlock and water hemlock are all different, but they look a lot alike.

A lot of people have killed themselves thinking they were really cool going out and eating wild carrot or wild parsnip, and they're eating water hemlock. And there's nothing you can do for them, they're dead before you can get them to town.

The same rules apply to mushrooms.  
Some mushrooms are incredibly deadly.

Liver damage from eating wild mushrooms is one of the leading reasons that people need emergency liver transplants. Some of them cause complete liver failure. A lot of times people get a false recovery after a few days they don't feel sick anymore and they think they're okay.

Then their liver completely collapses.

### **Diagnosis/signs**

Nausea, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea and vomiting. Difficulty breathing, coughing of blood, may or may not turn blue, lethargy and convulsion. There may be burn marks in or around the mouth.

**If you suspect a child has eaten a nonfood plant:**

Get help immediately if:

 The person is unconscious or not breathing.

 There are any signs of poisoning.  
Contact your local Poison Information Centre.

- 1. CALL YOUR POISON CONTROL CENTER IMMEDIATELY.** Don't take any action before you seek advice from your local poison control center. Poison control will give different advice based on what's been ingested. For instance, some plants are too caustic to induce vomiting. If your child's throat is swollen or he or she has difficulty breathing, call 911 or your local emergency number.
- 2. IF YOU MUST GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM, TAKE THE PLANT OR REMNANTS OF THE PLANT WITH YOU.** Particularly if you couldn't identify the plant to poison control, the physician or other staff at the emergency room may be able to identify what exactly was ingested. They will be able to decide a course of action based on knowledge of the plant your child ate. Remember that it is better to identify your plants first, so that the physicians won't have to take the worst-case action.

### **Home treatment**

If the person is not breathing, do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, but first check for poisonous material around the mouth. Wash the area around the person's mouth and if necessary, use a barrier device.

Establish the following: what poison was taken; the amount; how the poison entered the body; when the poison was taken. Phone the Poison Information Centre and ask for instructions of what to do.

Keep a sample of what the person has taken, even if it is an empty container or leaves of a poisonous plant.

**Never** try to induce vomiting as this could cause further damage. Some poisons, especially corrosive substances can cause further damage during vomiting.

**Do not** give fluid, including Syrup of Ipecac, or activated charcoal unless told to do so by the Poison Information Centre.

### **Heading Off Trouble**

With a little planning and preparation before going camping, most of the hazards associated with toxic plants can be avoided. Do a little research.

What plants are a serious problem in the area where you'll be camping?

Find out whom to call in that area in the event of a poisoning incident.

Then select the campsite with care. Don't pitch a tent in the middle of a patch

of poison ivy. And watch out for widow-makers—overhead limbs or dead trees that may fall on you.

After camp is established, remove any hazardous plants, including mushrooms, to avoid coming in contact with them later.

Always be sure of what you're burning. A wood fire smells great, but the smoke from toxic plants can be just as dangerous as the plant itself, if touched.

## 10 Rules For Safe Camping With Hazardous Plants

Here are some basic rules for keeping both you and your children out of trouble with hazardous plants when camping:

📌 Learn before you go.

Do some research at the library or on the Internet and find out which plants in the area where you'll be camping are the most dangerous.

📌 Check with the sheriff's department, police department, or hospital in the area where you'll be camping, get the telephone number of the nearest poison information center, and keep it easily accessible in your car or camper.

📌 Choose the campsite carefully. Don't camp under a tree you know is toxic, or in an area with a lot of poison ivy or other plants with irritating sap.

📌 Don't camp under a tree with a lot of dead branches in it—a falling branch can cause injuries when it hits.

📌 Teach children that putting anything in their mouths is dangerous.

📌 Carry one bottle of Syrup of Ipecac in your camper or car for each child under six.

**(Don't use it unless a physician or poison information center tells you to do so.)**

📌 Remove wild mushrooms and small toxic plants from the campsite; use gloves, not bare hands.

📌 If a child puts something in his or her mouth that you suspect is toxic, call the poison information center immediately.

📌 Use wood only from known sources in your campfire. The smoke from poison ivy or other toxic plants can be just as dangerous as the plant itself.

**Below is a partial list of toxic plants.**

<a href="#"><u>Amaryllis</u></a>	Eucalyptus	Philodendron
<a href="#"><u>Azalea</u></a>	Eyebane	Podocarpus
<a href="#"><u>Begonia, sand</u></a>	Foxglove	Poison ivy
Bird of Paradise	Geranium	Poison oak
Black nightshade berry	Golden chain	Poison sumac
Buttercup	Holly berry	Pokeweed
Butterfly weed	Horsechestnut	Potato plant
Caladium	Hyacinth	Pothos
Calamondin orange tree	Hydrangea blossom	Pyracantha
Calla lily	Iris	Rhododendron
Carnation	Jack-in-the-pulpit	Rhubarb
Castor bean	Jasmine	Skunk cabbage
Chinaberry	Jequirity bean	Snow-on-the-mountain
Chinese Tollow	Jerusalem cherry	Spathe flower
Christmas berry	Jimson weed	String of pearls
Chrysanthemum	Juniper	Tomato leaves
Cyclamen	Lantana	Tulips
Daffodil	Larkspur	Violet seeds
Daisy	Laurel	Water Hemlock
Daphne	Lily-of-the-valley	Wild carrots
Deadly nightshade	May Apple	Wild cucumber
Devils Ivy	Mistletoe	Wild parsnip
Dieffenbachia	Moonflower	Wild peas
Dumbcane	Morning glory	Wisteria
	Needlepoint ivy	Yew tree
	Oleander	

Elderberry      Oxallis

Elephant ears

English  
holly/English  
ivy

And by the way, daisies, if you were wondering, are considered toxic plants, but they are not as poisonous as other plants. They contain pyrethrins, which can irritate the skin or the stomach if large quantities are ingested. Pyrethrin compounds are used in lice preparations, animal flea control, and indoor insecticides.

So, please . . .



don't eat the daisies.

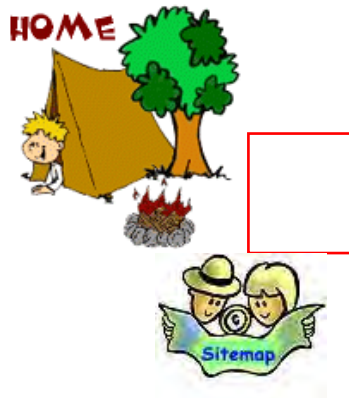
Click on a site below to learn more about poisonous plants.



**Cornell University**  
**Poisonous Plants Informational Database**



College of  
**Veterinary Medicine**  
&  
**Biomedical Sciences**



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The objective of this Web Page is to familiarize you with basic first aid techniques in some common emergencies -  
**not to make you an expert in first aid**

***When journeying into the wilderness it is important to carry a complete First Aid Kit and a First Aid Book.  
It is also wise to take a first aid course.***

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Please consult your healthcare provider with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your condition.

The information on this page is designed as a reference material only, to help people who have already taken a wilderness first aid course and CPR training. It is not a substitute for training and certification in first aid and CPR. If you have not been properly trained in these procedures, you can cause more harm to your patient by treating him or her.

If you haven't taken a first aid or CPR course, take one before you go into the backcountry!

[see terms of this site](#)

It is your responsibility to attend a Certified First-Aid CPR Course  
(American Heart Association or Red Cross)

**It's an old saying,  
but,  
"An Ounce of Prevention, IS Worth a Pound of Cure",  
especially in an emergency situation when seconds count.**

Here are a few selected first aid tips that may be useful in a disaster situation!!

First aid is the immediate care given to a person who is injured or ill. Sudden illness or injury can often cause irreversible damage or death to the victim unless proper care is initiated as soon as possible. First aid includes identifying a life-threatening condition, taking action to prevent further injury or death, reducing pain, and counteracting the effects of shock, should they be present.

Because life-threatening situations do occur, everyone should know how to provide emergency care until a victim can be treated or transported to a medical facility.

First aid is not intended to replace care by a physician. Its intent is to protect the victim until medical assistance can be obtained. For any situation that appears to be life-threatening, it's important to remember to call 9-1-1 and get help on the way as soon as possible .

### The primary purpose of first aid is to:

- Care for life-threatening situations
- Protect the victim from further injury and complications.
- Arrange transportation for the victim to a medical facility.
- Make the victim as comfortable as possible to conserve strength.
- Provide reassurance to the victim.

### As a Rule of Thumb Call 9-1-1 if:

- The victim has lost consciousness, is unusually confused, or is losing consciousness.
- The victim has difficulty breathing or is not breathing in a normal way.
- The victim has chest pain or pressure that won't go away.
- The victim has persistent pressure or pain in the abdomen.
- The victim is vomiting or passing blood .
- The victim is having seizures or severe headache, or has slurred speech.
- The victim has head, neck, or back injuries .
- The victim seems to have been poisoned.

An accident can occur at any time or any place If you are the first person to arrive, there are a few basic principles you should follow to protect yourself and the victim First, **CALL 9-1-1**: then:

1. **Survey the Scene.** Before you help the victim, determine if the scene is safe. If anything dangerous is present, don't put your own life at risk to try and help the victim: you will be of no aid if you become a victim too. Summon help and wait for trained people to resolve the situation. If the scene is safe, try and determine what happened and how many victims there may be. Never move the victim unless an immediate, life-threatening danger exists, such as a fire or the threat of a building collapse.
2. **Primary Victim Survey.** After ensuring the scene is safe, you can turn your attention to the victim. Begin by performing a primary survey to determine if the victim:

- is conscious
- has an open, unobstructed airway
- is breathing
- has a heartbeat
- is not bleeding severely

To check for consciousness, gently tap the person and ask if they are okay.

If there is no response, this is an indication that a possible life-threatening situation may exist.

If the person is responsive and can talk or cry, this indicates they are conscious, breathing, have an unobstructed airway, and a pulse.

If the victim is unconscious, kneel down next to the head and check for the **ABCs**: Airway, Breathing, and Circulation. To check the airway (clear and maintain an open airway), breathing (restore breathing), and for circulation (restore circulation), place your ear next to the victim's mouth and listen/feel for breath sounds while looking for a rise and fall of the chest. While doing this, check for a pulse by placing your fingers on the neck, just below the angle of the jaw, and feel for the pulse from the carotid artery. These three steps will determine if cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is needed.

If you would like to learn how to perform CPR and First Aid, contact your local fire department, hospital, or the American Red Cross.

It is **your responsibility** to attend a Certified First-Aid CPR Course  
(*American Heart Association or Red Cross*)



## Head - to - toe examination for injury

## should include:

Head, neck, shoulders, chest, arms, abdomen, back, pelvis, legs & feet

Vital signs you can check:

Level of consciousness, pupils, pulse, skin color, body temperature, respiration & response to stimulus

### But First!

The Primary Survey

#### Establish Responsiveness

Gently tap the person and ask,  
"Are you all right!"



### General Rules

#### Do not move the victim unless necessary

Although each case involving injury or sickness presents its own special problems, some general rules apply to practically all situations. Become familiar with these basic rules before you go on to learn first aid treatment for specific types of injuries:

The specific sequence of actions when dealing with this situation is:

- + Remain calm, providing your patient with quiet, efficient first aid treatment.
- + Keep the victim warm and lying down motionless, head level with the body, until you have found out what type of injury has occurred and how serious it is.

If the victim shows one of the following difficulties, follow the rule given for that specific problem;

- + Start mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration immediately if the injured person is not breathing.

- + Stop any bleeding.

Vomiting or bleeding from the mouth and semiconscious: If the victim is in danger of sucking in blood, vomited matter or water, place the victim on his/her side or back with their head turned to one side and lower than the feet.

- + Give your patient reassurance. Watch carefully for signs of shock.

- + Check for cuts, fractures, breaks and injuries to the head, neck or spine.

- + Do not allow people to crowd the injured person

- + Do not remove clothing unless it is imperative.

- + To determine the extent of the victim's injuries, carefully rip or cut the clothing along the seams. If done improperly, the removal of the victim's clothing could cause great harm, especially if fractures are involved. When clothing is removed, ensure that the victim does not get chilled. Shoes may also be cut off to avoid causing pain or increased injury.

- + Decide if your patient can be moved to a proper medical facility. If this is not possible, prepare a suitable living area in which shelter, heat and food are provided.

- + Shortness of breath: If the victim has a chest injury or breathing difficulties place him/her on

their back with their head slightly lower than the feet.

- +** Do not move the victim more than is absolutely necessary.
- +** The victim should not see the actual injury. You should make the victim more comfortable by ensuring the individual that the injuries are understood and medical attention is on the way.
- +** Do not touch open wounds or burns with fingers or other objects unless sterile compresses or bandages are not available and it is absolutely necessary to stop severe bleeding.
- +** Don't give an unconscious person any solid or liquid substance by mouth. The person may vomit and get some material into the lungs when breathing, causing choking and possibly death.
- +** If a bone is broken, or you suspect one is broken, do not move the victim until you have immobilized the injured part. This may prove lifesaving in cases of severe bone fractures or spinal cord injuries. The jagged bone may sever nerves, blood vessels, damage tissues and induce or increase shock. Threat of fire, necessity to abandon ship or other similar situations may require that the victim be moved. The principle that further damage could be done by moving the victim should always be kept in mind and considered against other factors.
- +** When transporting an injured person, always see that the litter is carried feet forward no matter what the injuries are. This will enable the rear bearer to observe the victim for any respiratory obstruction or stoppage of breathing.
- +** Keep the injured person warm enough to maintain normal body temperature.

Very serious injuries may require heroic first aid measures on your behalf. The greater the number of injuries, the more you must exhibit better judgment and self-control to prevent yourself and well-intentioned bystanders from trying to do too much.

If there is no response, begin the ABC's of CPR



### Seek Medical Attention!

It is your responsibility to attend a Certified First-Aid CPR Course (American Heart Association or Red Cross)



The following steps for cardiopulmonary resuscitation are not meant to be an absolute guide for performing this lifesaving procedure, but rather as a reminder for those who have forgotten their skills, or an introduction for those who are interested in taking an instructional class in the future.

A person is not legally insured to perform CPR unless he has passed a written and skills exam and been certified by an

organization such as the American Red Cross.

It is highly encouraged that everyone receive this basic training, even children.

**Do not perform CPR unless you are professionally trained and certified.**

CPR should not be attempted by a rescuer who has not been properly trained.

To learn CPR, consult a qualified instructor.

Improperly done CPR can cause serious damage.

Therefore, it is never practiced on a healthy individual for training purposes; a training aid is used instead.

Then why did I put this section on this web page?

If it was me and my Wife or one of my boys were needing CPR and we are stranded with NO WAY to get Medical Help - I would rather take my chances in saving them than to watch them die . . .

just my opinion!

## CPR Basics

**NOTE: To properly learn CPR, a certified instructor must conduct the training.**

### Cardio - Pulmonary - Resuscitation CPR

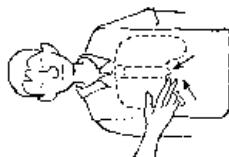
**First** - Tilt head back & lift chin up, pinch victim's nose shut

Blow 2 slow breaths into victim's mouth  
(2 seconds for adults, 1-1/2 for children)

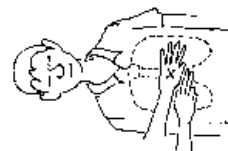
- inhale after each breath
- watch for chest to rise
- allow deflation after each breath
- reposition neck if necessary



Check pulse - put 2 fingers in groove of neck nearest you - if there is no pulse, begin chest compressions



Slide fingers up rib cage to notch in middle of chest



Put index finger in notch & slide heel of other hand next to fingers



Now put hand that found the rib notch on top of other hand & press downward with heel of bottom hand about 1 1/2-2 inches, making sure to keep your arms straight

**NOTE: Use only one hand on a child or small or aged adult**





Keep this procedure up, alternating breaths & compressions:

- 2 breaths
- 15 compressions  
(one-and-two-and . . .)
- 2 breaths - continue until victim breathes or help arrives

Check pulse & breathing regularly for any response

Repeat these steps approximately 12 to 15 times per minute.

If treating a child, cover the nose and mouth with your mouth. Use smaller puffs of air and repeat this method 20 to 25 times per minute.

**Seek Medical Attention!**



## 10 Common First Aid Mistakes

*Picture this: You're walking through the woods behind your house and are bitten by a rattlesnake. What would you do?*

*John Wayne probably would have pulled out his penknife, sliced the bite wound, sucked out the venom and tied on a tourniquet. But that's the wrong approach for anyone except a silver-screen cowboy.*

*"The safest thing to do for snakebite is just splint the limb and go to the hospital," says Christopher P. Holstege, M.D., assistant professor of emergency medicine at the University of Virginia Health Sciences Center and director of the Blue Ridge Poison Center in Charlottesville, Va.*

*"Cutting the bite wound could sever tendons, nerves or arteries or increase the risk of infection, and tourniquets are risky," Dr. Holstege explains.*

Dr. Holstege recommends the right approaches for the following first-aid myths.



**Myth: Put butter on a burn.**

**Reality:** If you apply butter or another substance to a serious burn, you could make it difficult for a doctor to treat the burn later and increase risk of infection.

**The right approach:** "It's usually OK to cool the burn with cold water, but burns with significant blistering need to be seen at a health care facility," says Dr. Holstege. Keep the burn clean and loosely covered; don't pop the blisters.



**Myth: Give syrup of ipecac before calling the poison-control center.**

**Reality:** If your child swallows something poisonous, hold off on the syrup of ipecac -- the over-the-counter treatment for inducing vomiting. "If someone ingests a hydrocarbon such as gasoline or kerosene, for example, vomiting can cause aspiration in the lungs," Dr. Holstege says.

**The right approach:** Immediately call your doctor or a poison-control center for advice.



**Myth: Apply a tourniquet to a bleeding extremity.**

**Reality:** When severe bleeding occurs, some people mistakenly tie a belt or shoestring around the limb above the wound to slow the flow of blood. But doing so can cause permanent tissue damage.

**The right approach:** Pad the wound with layers of sterile gauze or cloth, apply direct pressure, and wrap the wound securely. Seek medical help if the bleeding doesn't stop or if the wound is gaping, dirty or caused by an animal bite.

---

**Myth: Apply heat to a sprain, strain or fracture.**

**Reality:** Heat gives the opposite of the desired effect -- it promotes swelling and can keep the injury from healing as quickly as it could.

**The right approach:** Apply ice, alternating 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off, for the first 24 to 48 hours.

---

**Myth: You should move someone injured in a car accident.**

**Reality:** A person with a spinal-cord injury won't necessarily appear badly injured, but pulling him or her out of a vehicle -- even removing the helmet from an injured motorcyclist -- could lead to paralysis or death.

**The right approach:** If the vehicle isn't threatened by fire or another serious hazard, it's best to leave the person in place until paramedics arrive.

---

**Myth: Rub your eye when you get a foreign substance in it.**

**Reality:** Doing so could cause a serious tear or abrasion.

**The right approach:** Rinse the eye with tap water.

---

**Myth: Use hot water to thaw a cold extremity.**

Hands and feet go numb when they get too cold, in which case many people try to warm them up by putting them under hot water.

**Reality:** Hot water can cause further damage.

**The right approach:** Use lukewarm water only, or use dry heat.

---

**Myth: Sponge on rubbing alcohol to reduce a fever.**

**Reality:** Alcohol can get absorbed by the skin, which can cause alcohol poisoning, especially in young children.

**The right approach:** "Take acetaminophen or Ibuprofen," says Dr. Holstege. "If a fever is very high, have it checked by a physician or treated in a hospital emergency room."

---

**Myth: It's OK to treat at home an allergic response to a bee sting.**

**Reality:** Delaying professional treatment could be fatal.

**The right approach:** For symptoms such as breathing problems, tight throat or swollen tongue, call an ambulance immediately.

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## CUTS

Cuts are defined as any opening or breaking of the skin. Cuts are a common injury, and the first step in treating a cut is to determine whether it is a major or minor wound. A major wound is defined as any wound where:

- The bleeding does not stop after five minutes of steady pressure
- The victim has been bitten by an animal or human or deeply punctured by any dirty object
  - The wound has glass, dirt or metal embedded inside
- The wound leads to swelling, fever or problems with movement or sensation

If any of these conditions are present, medical attention should be sought immediately.

### **First aid:**

- All cuts, whether a major or minor cut, need first aid. In treating any cut, caregivers should always wash their hands with soap and water before and after treatment. Breathing or coughing on the wound should be avoided in order to prevent infection.
- The most important goal is to stop the bleeding as much as possible by applying direct pressure to the wound. In the case of a wound with an embedded object, indirect pressure should be applied. This pressure will help to close the wound, thus stopping the bleeding and limiting further contamination of the wound.
- If it is determined that a wound is not major, it should be cleaned thoroughly with mild soap and water, then covered with an antibiotic ointment and a clean bandage. It is advised not to attempt to clean a large wound, as this may cause excessive bleeding. Instead, cover it with a clean cloth and apply direct pressure.

Even when all precautions are taken, a wound may become infected.

Wounds that are more likely to become infected are bites, punctures, dirty wounds and wounds that do not receive proper medical attention. Symptoms of infection include:

- A painful, throbbing sensation
  - Swelling
- Pus-like drainage
- Heat in the area
- Redness



An antibiotic should be applied to any infected wound, and professional medical attention may be needed to ensure proper healing.



## Abrasion's

It is important for the outdoor enthusiast to carry the knowledge and material for treating "road rash" for several reasons. One is they hurt, and proper treatment reduces pain, eventually. Another is that untreated abrasions leave more noticeable scars. A third reason is to prevent infection, and few wounds are more prone to infection than an abrasion.

The time it takes to properly treat an abrasion is directly proportional to the size and strength of the victim. Wimpy people can be held down while they are being vocally abusive as their wounds are thoroughly cleaned and bandaged. With large, powerful patients, you'll want to get in and get out fast.

### **Treatment:**

- Irrigate the wound to remove loose foreign material. Water will do fine, and any water safe to drink is safe to clean wounds. This is best done with an irrigation syringe, a device that comes in most first aid kits. Or fill a plastic bag with water and punch a pinhole in it. The idea is to create a forceful stream to wash out dirt and debris. In the process, you may, also, be washing out some of the germs.
- Vigorously scrub the abrasion. Some first aid kits have cleansing pads especially made for abrasions and containing a topical anesthetic. Cleansing pads allow you to wipe the abrasion gently first, and wait about five minutes for the anesthetic to work. Warning: the scrubbing is still quite painful, but absolutely necessary for safeguarding against infection and tattooing (a unique form of scarring left by embedded material). You can scrub with any clean cloth and any soap. Scrub until nothing remains visible in the wound except raw meat.
- Rinse the wound again. If the scrubbing has started some bleeding, you can just let it bleed or apply pressure with a sterile gauze pad or sponge. Letting it bleed might be a bit better since the patient is doing a little involuntary self-cleaning of the wound.
  - When you have a clean, non-bleeding wound, apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment (not cream, but ointment).
- Dress and bandage the wound. Dressings go directly on the abrasion, and any non-adherent dressing will work. Spenco 2nd Skin works really well, soothing with its coolness, protecting with its rubbery-ness, allowing you to see through to watch the wound for signs of infection. It can be left in place as long as no infection shows up. Over the dressing goes the bandage. You can tape a gauze pad over the dressing, but elastic wraps work better, being more secure. Stretch gauze is probably the best: it conforms easily to the shape of the abraded body part, it is lightweight, it is more difficult to put it on too tight (which can cut off healthy blood flow).

Human skin is tough and resilient, fortunately, and abrasions, with a little pre-planning, are easy to manage.

We're lucky that way . . .  
er, I mean, it could be worse!

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## Altitude Sickness

### Minimize pain & maximize fun.

Adventurers heading for the mountains hoping to experience what they pray will be ideal

skiing, climbing or mountaineering conditions and with a need to cram a week's worth of adventure into an action-packed weekend are asking for trouble by forgetting that they live at sea level most of the year.

Why?

Altitude sickness, that purveyor of nausea, headaches, insomnia and other sometimes more serious maladies is the reason.

Altitude sickness doesn't discriminate--it can affect anyone regardless of age, sex or physical conditioning. In fact, some of the best and most well-conditioned athletes suffer altitude sickness. Altitude sickness can even occur despite a history of not being susceptible. Edmund Hillary, world renowned mountaineer began experiencing altitude sickness years after he had summited Everest.

Too high, too fast appears to be a major cause of altitude sickness. Altitude sickness occurs most commonly at elevations above 8,000 feet but can certainly happen above 6,000 feet. Dehydration and overexertion are major contributing factors.

Regardless of what causes it, there are some precautions one can utilize to minimize the possibility of becoming altitude sick. Climb high and sleep low is one tried and true technique employed by mountaineers, but this is not always practical when your condo is at 8,000 feet and you are skiing or climbing at 9,000 feet.

Keeping your ascent under moderation is another technique, but again, when skiing the point becomes somewhat moot since lift lines shoot you up and down several thousand feet throughout the day.

"The classic avoidance technique is to acclimatize by not ascending more than 1,000 feet per day above 7,500 feet," says Dr. Paul Auerbach, Chief of Emergency Medicine at Stanford University Medical Center.

Jumping into the car at sea level and leaping out at 9,000 feet to play blows any acclimatization plan clean out of the water and really opens the door for altitude sickness. Auerbach suggests spending some time with the feet up in the tent, condo or lodge before adventuring out. If that means adding a day to your weekend in the name of health, so be it.

"Dehydration is a causative and a worsening factor when it comes to altitude sickness," says Auerbach. "It is critical that a person stays well hydrated so that urination is frequent and clear or light colored."

Auerbach also recommends laying off the coffee and tea since both are diuretics (causes your body to lose vital fluids). Liquor, aside from the fact that it is also a diuretic and clouds judgment is even worse for the body since symptoms of a hangover mimic those of altitude sickness confusing diagnosis.

Acetazolamide (Diamox) is a prescription drug that does appear to be a factor in enhancing a person's ability to acclimate to altitude, and is used in reducing the effects of altitude sickness. Like any drug, it does have side effects and is not for everyone. It is a sulfa derivative so persons allergic to sulfa drugs should not take it and it is also a mild diuretic so maintaining a regular fluid intake is essential. Seek the advice of your physician before using the drug.

"Although it is recommended in higher doses, we are finding that doses of 62.5 or 125 mg twice per day beginning upon ascent to altitude and continuing for a day after the highest altitude has been reached are sufficient," says Auerbach.

How do you know if you have altitude sickness? An early morning headache that doesn't go away is one fairly sure sign. Low levels of energy, insomnia, shortness of breath, nausea and loss of appetite are all symptoms that can, either alone, or in combination indicate altitude sickness.

Descending and reducing your level of activity are the standard remedies once you feel altitude sick. Do not push it! While mild symptoms are more a nuisance than a health threat, they are a definite warning to acclimatize.

Levels of altitude sickness can progress to moderate and then severe which may result in required hospitalization or death in extreme cases. Confusion, vomiting, difficulty walking a straight line or severe shortness of breath are signs of impending severe high altitude illness. In such a case, the victim should be immediately brought to medical attention for the

administration of oxygen and rapid descent to a lower altitude.

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## Shock

### *The Silent Killer*



Straighten victim's legs & elevate above heart 8" to 12"

Shock is a life-threatening secondary condition wherein the body's vital physical and mental functions are seriously impaired due to an inadequate supply of oxygenated blood reaching the lungs, heart or brain. This is the body's reaction to a serious injury, illness, or other traumatic event.

Shock is a depression of all of the body processes and may follow any injury regardless of how minor. Factors such as hemorrhage, cold and pain will intensify shock. When experiencing shock the patient will feel weak and may faint. The skin becomes cold and clammy and the pulse, weak and rapid. Shock can be more serious than the injury itself.

#### **Characteristics of shock include:**

1. Anxiety (usually the earliest sign), weakness, paleness, sweating, and thirst;
2. Pulse may become rapid and weak;
3. Patient may become dizzy and pass out;
4. The more severe the injury or illness, the more likely shock will set in;
5. Shock can result in death if not treated rapidly.

#### **To treat shock, check your "ABC's," then,**

Use the following method to prevent and control shock:

1. Handle the patient gently, and only if necessary;
2. When treating injuries:
  - i. restore breathing
  - ii. stop bleeding
  - iii. treat breaks and fractures
2. If conscious and if there are no head or chest injuries place the patient on his/her back with the head and chest lower than the legs. This will help the blood circulate to the brain, heart, lungs and other major organs. If the patient is unconscious, place face down, with the head to one side, to prevent choking on blood, vomit or the tongue. But only if no neck injury is suspected;
3. Except in the case of a head injury or suspected neck fracture, lower the head and shoulders and elevate the feet approximately 15 inches; If severe head and chest injuries are present elevate the upper body. If chest injuries are present, elevate the injured side to assist in the functioning of the uninjured lung.
4. Make sure there are no broken bones before straightening the patient out;
5. Protect the patient from becoming cold, especially from the ground below;

6. Continue to reassure the patient.

**Shock is a life-threatening condition that requires immediate medical treatment.  
Some degree of shock can accompany any medical emergency.  
Shock can get worse very rapidly.  
Be prepared to begin rescue breathing or CPR as needed.**

### **First Aid**

1. Check the victim's airway, breathing, and circulation. If necessary, begin rescue breathing and CPR.
2. If the victim is conscious and does not have a head, leg, neck, or spinal injury, place the victim in the shock position by laying the victim on the back and elevating the lower extremities about 12 inches. Do not elevate the head. However, if the victim has sustained an injury in which raising the legs will cause pain, leave the victim flat.
3. If the victim has sustained a possible spinal injury, keep the victim in the position in which he or she was found.  
**Do not place the victim in the shock position.**
4. Give appropriate first aid for any wounds, injuries, or illnesses.
  5. Keep the person warm and comfortable.  
Loosen tight clothing.  
Don't give the victim anything to drink or eat.
6. If the victim vomits or is drooling, turn the head to one side so vomits can drain (as long as there is no suspicion of spinal injury). If spinal injury is suspected and the victim vomits, "log roll" him or her by supporting the neck and spine to keep head position neutral with body position while turning the victim onto his or her side.
7. **Call for immediate medical assistance and continue to monitor the victim's vital signs**  
*(temperature, pulse, rate of breathing, blood pressure)*  
**until help arrives.**

## **Do Not**

DO NOT give the victim anything by mouth.

DO NOT move the victim if a spinal injury is suspected.

DO NOT wait for milder shock symptoms to worsen before calling for emergency medical assistance.

## **Call immediately for emergency medical assistance if**

You suspect a person is in shock.

Try to determine the cause of shock.

Check for a medical alert tag.

Shock requires immediate treatment to prevent damage to vital organs and tissues.

### **Prevention**

Preventing shock is easier than trying to treat it once it happens.

Prompt treatment of the underlying cause will reduce the risk of developing severe shock.

Early first aid can help control shock.

**Major classes of shock include:**

## cardiogenic shock

*(associated with heart problems)*

*Cardiogenic shock is a disease state where the heart is damaged enough that it is unable to supply sufficient blood to the body.*

### Causes, incidence, and risk factors

Shock occurs whenever the heart is unable to pump enough blood for the needs of the body. Cardiogenic shock can be caused by disorders of the heart muscle, the valves, or the heart's electrical conduction system.

*Some related disorders include heart attack, heart failure, cardiomyopathy, rupture of the heart, abnormal heart rhythms, and heart valve disorders (especially leaky valves).*

### Symptoms

*rapid pulse  
pulse may be weak (thready)  
rapid breathing  
anxiety, nervousness  
skin may feel cool to touch  
weakness, lethargy, fatigue  
decreased mental status  
loss of alertness  
loss of ability to concentrate  
restlessness, agitation, confusion  
coma  
skin color pale or mottled  
profuse sweating, moist skin  
decreased urine output (or none)  
poor capillary refill*

### Treatment

## Cardiogenic shock is a medical emergency!

*Treatment requires hospitalization.*

*The goal of treatment is to save the patient's life and treat the underlying cause of shock*

## hypovolemic shock

*(caused by inadequate blood volume)*

*A condition where the heart is unable to supply enough blood to the body because of blood loss, or inadequate blood volume.*

### Causes, incidence, and risk factors

Loss of approximately one-fifth or more of the normal blood volume produces hypovolemic shock. The loss can be from any cause, including external bleeding (from cuts or injury), bleeding from the gastrointestinal tract, other internal bleeding, or diminished blood volume resulting from excessive loss of other body fluids (such as can occur with diarrhea, vomiting, burns, and so on). In general, larger and more rapid blood volume losses result in more severe shock symptoms.

### Symptoms

*rapid pulse  
pulse may be weak (thready)  
rapid breathing  
anxiety or agitation  
cool, clammy skin  
weakness  
pale skin color (pallor)  
sweating, moist skin  
decreased or no urine output  
low blood pressure  
confusion  
unconsciousness*

### Treatment

## Obtain professional medical care immediately!

### Limited measures to help include:

Keep the victim comfortable and warm (to avoid hypothermia).

Have the victim lie flat with the feet elevated about 12 inches to increase circulation. However, if the victim suffers from a head, neck, back, or leg injury, leave the victim in the position in which they were found unless doing so poses other immediate danger.

Do not give fluids by mouth.

If victim is stung or suffering an allergic reaction, treat the allergic reaction.

If the victim must be carried, try to maintain the flat, head down, feet elevated position.  
Stabilize the head and neck before moving a victim with a suspected spinal injury.

## **anaphylactic shock**

*(caused by allergic reaction)*

*Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening type of allergic reaction*

### **Causes, incidence, and risk factors**

Anaphylaxis is an acutesystemic (whole body) type of allergic reaction. It occurs when a person has become sensitized to a certain substance or allergen (that is, the immune system has been abnormally triggered to recognize that allergen as a threat to the body).

On the second or subsequent exposure to the substance, an allergic reaction occurs. This reaction is sudden, severe, and involves the whole body.

Tissues in different parts of the body release histamine and other substances. This causes constriction of the airways, resulting in wheezing; difficulty breathing; and gastrointestinal symptoms such as abdominal pain, cramps, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Histamine causes the blood vessels to dilate (which lowers blood pressure) and fluid to leak from the bloodstream into the tissues (which lowers the blood volume), resulting in shock. Fluid can leak into the alveoli (air sacs) of the lungs, causing pulmonary edema.

Hives and angioedema (hives on the lips, eyelids, throat, and/or tongue) often occur, and angioedema may be severe enough to cause obstruction of the airway. Prolonged anaphylaxis can cause heart arrhythmias.

Some drugs (polymyxin, morphine, X-ray dye, and others) may cause an anaphylactoid reaction (anaphylactic-like reaction) on the first exposure. This is usually from a toxic or idiosyncratic reaction rather than the "immune system" mechanism that occurs with "true" anaphylaxis, though the symptoms, risk for complications without treatment, and therapy are the same.

Anaphylaxis can occur in response to any allergen. Common causes include insect bites/stings, horse serum (used in some vaccines), food allergies, and drug allergies. Pollens and other inhaled allergens rarely cause anaphylaxis. Some people have an anaphylactic reaction with no identifiable cause.

Anaphylaxis occurs infrequently. However, it is life-threatening and can occur at any time. Risks include prior history of any type of allergic reaction.

### **Symptoms**

*Symptoms may include the following:*

*Difficulty breathing*  
*Wheezing*  
*Abnormal (high-pitched) breathing sounds*  
*Confusion*  
*Slurred speech*  
*Rapid or weak pulse*  
*Blueness of the skin (cyanosis), including the lips or nail beds*  
*Fainting, light-headedness, dizziness*  
*Hives and generalized itching*  
*Anxiety*  
*Sensation of feeling the heart beat (palpitations)*  
*Nausea, vomiting*  
*Diarrhea*  
*Abdominal pain or cramping*  
*Skin redness*  
*Nasal congestion*  
*Cough*

*Note:* *Symptoms develop rapidly, often within seconds or minutes.*

### **Treatment**

**Anaphylaxis is an emergency condition  
requiring  
immediate professional medical attention.**

*Assessment of the ABC's (airway, breathing, and circulation from Basic Life Support) should be done in all suspected anaphylactic reactions.*

*CPR should be initiated if indicated.*

*People with known severe allergic reactions may carry an Epi-Pen or other allergy kit, and should be assisted if necessary.*

## **septic shock**

(associated with infections)

*Septic shock is a serious, abnormal condition that occurs when an overwhelming infection leads to low blood pressure and low blood flow. Vital organs, such as the brain, heart, kidneys, and liver may not function properly or may fail. Decreased urine output from kidney failure may be one manifestation.*

### **Causes, incidence, and risk factors**

Septic shock occurs most often in the very old and the very young. It also occurs in people with underlying illnesses. Any bacterial organism can cause septic shock. Fungi and (rarely) viruses may also cause this condition. Toxins released by the bacteria or fungus may cause direct tissue damage, and may lead to low blood pressure and/or poor organ function. These toxins also produce a vigorous inflammatory response from the body which contributes to septic shock.

Risk factors include underlying illnesses, such as diabetes; hematologic cancers (lymphoma or leukemia); and other malignancies and diseases of the genitourinary system, liver or biliary system, and intestinal system. Other risk factors are recent infection, prolonged antibiotic therapy, and having had a recent surgical or medical procedure.

### **Symptoms**

Fever, chills  
Feeling light-headed  
Shortness of breath  
Palpitations  
Cool, pale extremities  
Elevated temperature  
Restlessness, agitation, lethargy, or confusion

#### **Some physical findings may be easily detected:**

Rapid heart rate  
Low blood pressure, especially when standing  
Low urine output

### **Treatment**

**Septic shock is a medical emergency,  
and patients are usually admitted to intensive care.**

and  
**neurogenic shock**  
(caused by damage to the nervous system)

**Shock is a life-threatening condition that requires immediate medical treatment.**

Some degree of shock can accompany any medical emergency.  
Shock can get worse very rapidly.  
Be prepared to begin rescue breathing or CPR as needed.

### **Causes of Shock**

Bleeding ([hypovolemic shock](#))  
Dehydration ([hypovolemic shock](#))  
Heart attack ([cardiogenic shock](#))  
Heart failure ([cardiogenic shock](#))  
Trauma or serious injury  
Infections ([septic shock](#))  
Allergic reactions ([anaphylactic shock](#))  
Spinal injuries (neurogenic shock)  
Toxic shock syndrome



# Choking

## What to look for:



- Unable to speak, breathe or cough
- Clutching neck with one or both hands
- Wheezing, gurgling noise in throat
- Skin turning blue or ashen color

## Heimlich Maneuver

Stand behind victim with arms around victim's torso.  
 Clench one hand over the other; thumb side of fist pressing between the waist & bottom of ribs.  
 Apply pressure & jerk quickly upwards 4 times.



If alone, use your own fists & arms - or push down against any blunt projection.



Sometimes objects can be dislodged by a finger sweep. (Caution: When inserting your finger in any patient's mouth, be extremely careful of the risk of being bitten.) Grasp victim's jaw & tongue & lift upward - use hooking motion inside mouth from one cheek to other. (Be sure victim is choking & not experiencing a seizure.)



# WOUNDS

## Caring for a Minor Open Wound

Blood color in a minor wound is dark red/purple and is the result of venous bleeding.

- Stop the bleeding by applying direct pressure with a clean, absorbent cloth, if a cloth is not available, use your fingers.
- If the blood soaks through, apply a second bandage on top.

### DO NOT

remove the first bandage because it will disturb the clotting which has already occurred.

- If the bleeding still does not stop, elevate the wound higher than the heart.
- Once the bleeding stops, clean the wound gently to get all the debris and dirt out.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment if necessary.
- Wrap the wound firmly in a cloth or bandage. DO NOT cut the circulation off.




## Caring for a Major Open Wound

# External Bleeding

To control bleeding, elevate the wounded area above the heart and apply pressure using either gauze, clean cloth, dried seaweed or sphagnum moss. Use pressure at the pulse point between the injured area and the heart if bleeding fails to stop. If bleeding still persists, use a tourniquet between the injury and the heart. This method should only be used in extreme situations. After bleeding has been controlled, wash the wounded area with disinfectant and apply a dressing and bandages.

Most bleeding can be stopped by the following techniques:

 **Direct Pressure** Most bleeding can be controlled by applying direct pressure to the wound. Use a gloved hand (*to protect the rescuer from diseases the patient might be carrying*) and a piece of sterile gauze (*if available*) and apply firm pressure to wound. It may take up to 15 minutes before the bleeding is stopped completely. It is essential that the site of the bleeding be located exactly when applying direct pressure, otherwise blood will continue to flow past the piece of gauze and the bleeding won't be stopped. In some cases, you may have to cut away clothing, and/or wiping away blood until the wound can be seen clearly. Remember, if you can't see the wound, you can't control the bleeding. If bleeding continues, it is because direct pressure is not being completely directed on the entire wound. You may have to remove your hand, reassess where the wound is, and reapply direct pressure.

### **Elevation**

Elevate the wound above the heart. This will decrease the local blood pressure.

### **Other Techniques**

In many cases, especially in severe wounds, direct pressure and elevation will not stop bleeding.

**For these situations, use the following techniques in addition:**

### **Pressure Points**

Direct pressure stops most bleeding. Place sterile gauze or clean cloth over wound & apply pressure. If bleeding doesn't stop in 5 minutes, replace cloth and continue to apply direct pressure to wound while adding pressure to pressure points (below).

**X** Denotes spot to apply pressure if bleeding persists in indicated body areas



Temple or scalp



Face below eye



Shoulder or upper arm



Elbow



Lower arm



Hand



Thigh



Lower leg



Foot

**DO NOT** Use direct pressure on eye, embedded objects or open fractures

### **Pressure Bandages**

Pressure bandages are used in rare situations when the rescuer has difficulty holding sustained direct pressure to a wound such a severe laceration. In the event that this happens, use a circumferential gauze dressing, and tie the gauze dressing around the leg if the wound is on the leg, on the arm if the wound is on the arm, etc.. It must cover a wide area so the bandage does not cut off blood flow to the lower parts of the limb and cause ischemia. I recommend using a triangle bandage for this. The ends of the triangle bandage are small and can easily be tied together, and the middle of the bandage has lot's of fabric and a wide area to cover the wound properly. To make a triangle bandage, simply cut a clean cloth (old bed sheets work well) in a 45,45,90 degree triangle with the long end being about 3 feet long. With the longest side facing away from you, fold the 90 degree corner in. Depending on how big the wound is, is how for you fold in the corner. I recommend folding the corner 2 inches more than the size of the wound (if the wound is 5 inches long, fold the corner 7 inches).

DO NOT fold the corner any less than 3 inches, because the bandage could cut off circulation when tied around the wound. Continue to fold the folded corner over itself until it is aligned with the opposite edge. You should now have a long trapezoid consisting of a height that equals the length of the wound plus 2 inches, and a length of about 3 feet, depending on how long you cut your bandage. Place to middle of the bandage over the wound, and wrap the bandage around the leg, and tie the ends of the bandages together with a square knot. You tie a square knot by tying the first part of a shoelace knot, and then tying the first part of the shoelace knot again, only this time backwards the first time. A common rhyme for this knot is "right over left, left over right".

### **Tourniquets**

Tourniquets are rarely necessary except in situations of amputation. The only time a tourniquet should be used if all other techniques have failed and continued blood loss will cause death. To tie a tourniquet, use a piece of rope, or a tightly rolled triangle bandage above the wound. Tie the tourniquet tight enough to stop most, or all blood from flowing into the limb with the wound. Write the exact time the tourniquet was applied on the patients forehead, so that when the patient is evacuated, the EMT's, doctor's, etc. will know the duration of time the tourniquet was applied. This is critical when it comes to deciding whether the limb can be saved or if it needs to be amputated. Any time a tourniquet is applied, you run the risk of ischemia, and potential loss of limb. If it's "life or limb", consider a tourniquet.

\*Use a tourniquet  
**ONLY**  
as last resort  
 &  
never apply below the  
elbow or knee

### **DO NOT:**

**DO NOT** Use direct pressure on eye, embedded objects or open fractures

**DO NOT** Rinse wound with full strength medicines

**DO NOT** Close wounds with tape

**DO NOT** Breathe or blow on a wound



## Head Injury

A head injury is any trauma that leads to injury of the scalp, skull, or brain. These injuries can range from a minor bump on the skull to a devastating brain injury.

A concussion may result when the head strikes against an object or is struck by an object. Concussions may produce unconsciousness or bleeding in or around the brain.

Head injury can be classified as either closed or penetrating.

In a **closed** head injury, the head sustains a blunt force by striking against an object. A concussion is a type of closed head injury that involves the brain.

In a **penetrating** head injury, an object breaks through the skull and enters the brain. *(This object is usually moving at a high speed.)*

### Considerations

Injuries to the head are so common that almost everyone will sustain some form of trauma to the head at some point during their lifetime. Learning to recognize serious head injury, and implementing basic first aid, can make the difference in saving someone's life.

*Medical advances in detecting and treating these injuries, however, have improved the outlook for many of these injuries.*

Every year, approximately two million people sustain a head injury.

Most of these injuries are minor because the skull provides the brain with considerable protection -- thus symptoms of minor head injuries usually resolve with time. However, more than half a million head injuries a year are severe enough to require hospitalization.

### Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of a head injury may occur immediately or develop slowly over several hours. If a child begins to play or run immediately after getting a bump on the head, for example, serious injury is unlikely. However, the child should still be closely watched for the 24 hours, since symptoms of a head injury can be delayed.

When encountering a victim of a head injury, try to find out what happened. If the victim cannot tell you, look for clues and ask witnesses. In any head trauma victim that appears to have any serious injury, always assume that there is also injury to spinal cord.

The following symptoms suggest a more serious head injury that requires emergency medical treatment:

- Altered level of consciousness
  - Bleeding
- Decreased rate of breathing
  - Confusion
  - Convulsions
  - Fracture in the skull
- Facial bruising and fractures
- Fluid drainage from nose, mouth, or ears (may be clear or bloody)
  - Headache (may be severe)
  - Hypotension
- Increased drowsiness
- Initial improvement followed by worsening symptoms
  - Irritability
- Loss of consciousness
- Personality changes
  - Restlessness
  - Slurred speech
  - Stiff neck
- Swelling at the site of the injury
  - Blurry vision
  - Scalp wound
- Vomiting or nausea
  - Pupil changes
  - Unequal pupils*

**Note!** The signs & symptoms of brain injury may be observed immediately (as listed above) or may slowly develop over several hours.

Check out the victim by asking personal questions: name, birthday, home address, where they are, etc.  
If the victim can't answer these questions, it could indicate a concussion or closed head injury.

### **First Aid**

Treatment varies according to the severity of the injury, type and location of injury, and development of secondary complications. For mild head injury, no specific treatment may be needed other than observation for complications, although an initial medical evaluation should still be done.

Over-the-counter analgesics may be used for headache.

***Aspirin is usually discouraged because prolonged use increases the risk of bleeding.***

For moderate to severe head injury, where the victim is comatose or if symptoms are severe, urgent treatment is required.

Take the following first aid treatment steps:

1. Call the local emergency number (such as 911) before you begin treating someone with a severe head injury.
2. Check the victim's airway, breathing, and circulation. If necessary, begin rescue breathing and CPR.
3. If the victim's breathing and heart rate are satisfactory but he or she is unconscious, treat him or her as if there is a spinal injury. Stabilize the head and neck by placing your hands on both sides of the victim's head, keeping the head in line with the spine and preventing movement. Wait for medical help.
4. Unless there has been a skull fracture, attempt to stop any bleeding by firmly pressing a clean cloth on the wound. If the injury is serious, be careful not to move the victim's head. If blood soaks through the cloth, don't remove it, just place another cloth over the first one.
5. If you suspect a skull fracture, do not apply direct pressure to the bleeding site, and do not remove any debris from the wound. Cover the wound with sterile gauze dressing and get medical help immediately.
6. If a victim is vomiting, remember you must always suspect a spinal injury and roll the head, neck, and body as one unit to prevent choking. (Children often vomit once after a head injury. But even if the child does not vomit again and is not behaving differently, contact a doctor.)
7. Apply ice packs to swollen areas.

For patients with mild or moderate head injury and no loss of consciousness, a full medical evaluation should still be sought. If the patient is not hospitalized, you will receive instructions to observe the victim for any signs of a serious head injury over the next 24 hours. These instructions may include waking the patient every 2 to 3 hours during the night to check for alertness; you may be told to ask the victim specific questions, such as "What is your address?"

If the patient becomes unusually drowsy, develops a severe headache or stiff neck, vomits more than once, or behaves abnormally, get medical help immediately.

### **Do Not**

DO NOT remove the helmet of a victim if you suspect a serious head injury.

DO NOT wash a head wound that is deep or bleeding profusely.

DO NOT remove any object sticking out of a wound.


DO NOT move the victim unless absolutely necessary.

DO NOT shake the victim if he or she seems dazed.

DO NOT pick up a fallen child with any sign of head injury.

DO NOT consume alcohol within 48 hours of a serious head injury.

**Call immediately for emergency medical assistance if**

 There is severe head or facial bleeding.

- There is a change in the victim's level of consciousness (such as confusion or lethargy).
- There is any cessation of breathing.
- You suspect a serious head or neck injury.



## Eye Injuries

The eyes are one of the most vulnerable parts of the human anatomy, and injuries to the eye should be taken seriously. Injuries to the eye include eyeball scratches, small foreign bodies in the eye, larger objects stuck in the eye, chemical exposure, burns, cuts and blows to the eye. Washing your hands with soap and water should always precede treatment of any eye injury.

- In the case of an eyeball scratch, do not apply pressure to the eye and get medical help.
- If a small foreign body like sand or dirt enters the eye, normal blinking and tearing will usually remove the object. Do not allow yourself or the victim to rub the eye. If pain and redness continues, try to locate the foreign object by doing a visual search in a well-lighted area. If found, try to wash out the foreign object with water, or try to brush out the object by pulling the upper eyelid over the lashes of the lower eyelid. Do not use a cotton swab or tissue to lift out the object. If the object cannot be removed, or if it is removed and pain continues, cover the victim's eye with a clean cloth or sterile pad and seek medical help.
- If a large object is sticking out of the eye, do not attempt to pull it out. This will likely do much more damage than good. Instead, bandage the eye on either side of the object and tape a paper cup or cone over the object so that it cannot be touched. Also cover the uninjured eye to discourage eye movement. While emergency medical attention is being sought, reassure the victim, keeping him or her as calm as possible.
- If a harmful chemical substance has entered the victim's eye, use water to flush it out while waiting for medical help. Turn the victim's head on its side with the injured eye down and pour fresh water into the eye for at least 15 minutes. You may have to force the eye to remain open. If chemicals are in both eyes, have the victim flush out the eye by taking a shower. Contact lenses should be removed only after the eye has been thoroughly flushed out. After flushing the eye, cover both eyes with a clean cloth, even if only one eye is afflicted, as this discourages eye movement.
- If an eye gets burned, flush it with water if it is not too painful for the victim. Lightly apply a cool compress without putting any pressure on the eye. Seek medical help.
- If the eye has either been cut or received a hard blow, lightly apply a cool compress without putting any pressure on the eye, even if the eye is bleeding. If blood is pooling in the eye, cover both eyes with a clean cloth to deter eye movement and seek medical help.



## Spinal Injury

If victim is sitting up, support their head between your arms & gently lean them backward - making sure you keep their head & neck immobilized - if you must go for help, stabilize the head on both sides with objects



**Tell victim not to move**

**Note:** Spinal injuries can be difficult to evaluate.

If you suspect one ( pain over neck or spine, inability to move arms or legs, tingling or numbness in arms or legs, inability to wiggle toes or to feel your touch on soles of feet . . .)

**Do not** move victim unless it is absolutely necessary for safety reasons (victim is in dangerous place).

In most cases, you should just stabilize the victim & wait for professional help to arrive.



## Dislocations and Sprains

### What to do

**It is unwise to treat a dislocation unless you are a trained professional as permanent damage may occur.**

**The affected extremity should be supported using a sling or other device and pain controlled with aspirin or other suitable drugs.**

A dislocation is displacement of a bone end from its normal position at the joint, allowing the movement of the bone from its socket.

Example: Displacement of humerus (upper arm bone) from shoulder socket

Can cause a deformed looking shoulder



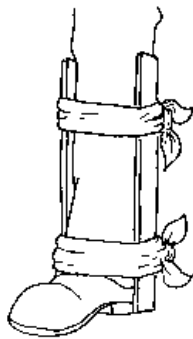
Prepare a splint with a thin board or foam board & wrap with bandages or clean cloth (t-shirt, etc.)



Arm & shoulder joints can be additionally stabilized by fashioning a sling & swathe as shown here

**Seek medical attention as soon as possible!**

Splint with boot on



If you suspect an ankle sprain, use the RICE procedures listed at left. Do not apply heat until at least 48 hours after the injury - If swelling & pain don't decrease within 48 hours, seek medical attention

## Sprains

Sprains are a sudden or violent twist or wrench of a joint beyond its normal range that results in a stretching or tearing of the joint's ligaments. Sprains are a common injury, and the most frequently sprained part of the body is the ankle. It is estimated that there are 27,000 ankle sprains in the United States everyday. Other areas commonly sprained are the wrist, knee, finger and toe.

Sprains can happen while playing sports or as easily as landing awkwardly while stepping off a curb. Even though sprains are often quite painful, they usually do not require professional medical attention to heal properly. When giving aid to a person with a sprain, call for emergency medical assistance if a broken bone is suspected or if there is an audible popping sound and the victim has difficulty in using the joint.

The first aid procedure for treating sprains can be summarized by the acronym **R.I.C.E.**, which stands for rest, ice, compression and immobilization, and elevation.

**Rest**

**Ice**

**Compression**

**Elevation**

**Rest**

When someone sprains a part of their body, the person should immediately rest the injured part. Further exertion could result in more damage to the sprained area.

**Ice**

To help reduce swelling, ice should be applied immediately to a sprained area, either by a cold compress or wrapped in a towel or piece of clothing.

**Compression**

and immobilization

The sprained area should be securely wrapped. Wrapping the area too tightly, however, could restrict circulation.

**Elevation**

The sprained part of the body should be elevated above the level of the heart. This is particularly true when sleeping.

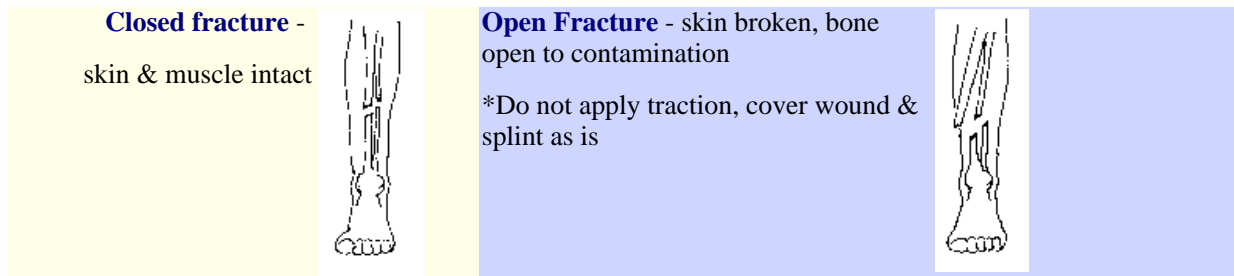
If you are hiking & sprain your ankle - Construct a splint over your boot until you return to camp or vehicle - Once boot is removed, hiking is finished - Don't push an injured ankle!



## Fractures

**There are two types of fractures:**

1. **Closed Fracture**, which is a break or crack in a bone that does not puncture or penetrate the skin.
2. **Open Fracture**, where there is a break in the skin caused by a protruding bone, or there is an open wound in the area of the fracture. Open fractures are more serious than closed fractures.



**Some symptoms of a fracture are:**

Signs that a fracture is present include:

1. Pain at the affected area.
2. The injured part appears deformed;  
*The area may or may not be deformed.*
3. Pain is present when attempting to move the part;
4. The victim is unable to place weight on the area without experiencing pain.
4. A grating sensation or sound may be present during any motion of the injured area.
5. Absence of feeling when touched;
6. Bluish color and swelling in the area of the injury.

**What to do**

Check: **C**irculation  
**S**ensation  
**M**ovement

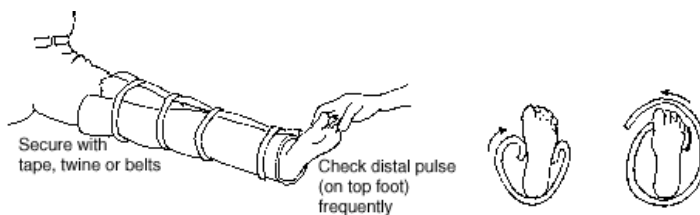
If body part is bent or deformed, apply gentle traction & apply a splint

You can fold a triangular bandage into a sling



**Seek medical attention as soon as possible with ANY broken bone**

Examples of Leg Splints



**To treat a fracture;**



1. If in doubt, treat the injury as a fracture.
2. Splint the joints above and below the fracture.
3. If the limb is grossly deformed by the fracture, splint in place, and do not try to straighten it;
4. Be sure to pad your splints and place it so that it supports the joint above and below the fracture. Immobilize a leg fracture by splinting the fractured leg to the unbroken leg if no other materials are present;
5. Check the splint ties frequently to be sure they do not hinder circulation.
6. Cover all open wound with a clean dressing before splinting.
3. 4. Elevate and use indirect (not on skin) ice packs if available.



## First Aid for Drowning



- 📌 When someone is drowning, get help immediately, but do not place yourself in danger. Do not get into the water or go out onto ice unless your own safety can be assured. Rescue options may include extending a long pole or branch to the victim, or using a throw rope attached to a buoyant object, such as a life ring or life jacket. Toss it to the floundering person, then pull him or her to shore.
- 📌 Keep in mind that victims who have fallen through the ice become hypothermic very rapidly and may not be able to grasp objects within their reach or hold on while being pulled to safety.
- 📌 If a person is still floundering in the water and you are appropriately trained to attempt rescue yourself, do so immediately if conditions do not pose undue risk to your own safety.
- 📌 If there is any likelihood of spinal injury, care must be taken to stabilize the victim's head and neck at all times during the rescue and resuscitation.
- 📌 If the victim's breathing has stopped, begin rescue breaths as soon as you safely can. This often means starting the breathing process while still in the water.
- 📌 Continue to breathe for the person every few seconds while moving them to shore. Once on land, check for a pulse (or other signs of circulation, such as spontaneous breathing, coughing, or movement) and administer CPR if needed.

For step-by-step instructions on rescue breathing, [see CPR and rescue breathing first aid.](#)

- 📌 The Heimlich maneuver should not be used routinely in the rescue of near-drowning victims. It should be used only if the airway is blocked with debris or vomit, and you are unable to successfully ventilate the victim (unable to get air into the the lungs with proper rescue breaths). Since most drowning victims do not breathe in large quantities of water, immediate rescue breaths are effective without first draining the lungs. Furthermore, performing the Heimlich maneuver unnecessarily may increase the chances that an unconscious victim will vomit, and subsequently choke on the vomitus.
- 📌 Always use caution when moving a drowning victim. Always assume that the victim may have a neck or spine injury, and avoid turning or bending the neck. Take appropriate steps to immobilize the head and neck during resuscitation and transport. Either tape it to a backboard or stretcher, or secure the neck by placing rolled towels or other objects around it. It is important to keep the victim calm and to keep them immobilized.

Seek medical help immediately.

- 📍 In order to prevent hypothermia, remove any cold, wet clothes from the victim and cover him with something warm, if possible.
- 📍 Once the victim is stabilized, administer first aid for any other serious injuries.
- 📍 As the victim revives, he may cough and experience difficulty breathing. Calm and reassure the victim until you get medical help. All near-drowning victims should be seen by a health care provider. Even though victims may revive quickly at the scene, lung complications are common.



## Hypothermia - Severe Cold

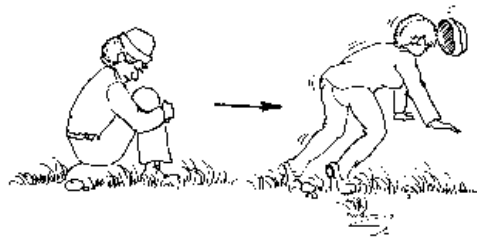
Signs & Symptoms:

### Early

- 📍 Shivering begins
  - 📍 Apathy
  - 📍 Clumsiness
  - 📍 Slurred speech
  - 📍 Stiff fingers
  - 📍 Stumbling
- 📍 Strange behavior

### Late

- 📍 Obvious mental deterioration
  - 📍 Incoherence
  - 📍 Unconsciousness



### Hypothermia Chart (In Water)

If the Water Temp. is (F.) . . .	Exhaustion or Unconsciousness	Expected Time of Survival is . . .
32.5°	Under 15 Min	Under 15-45 Min.
32.5°-40.0°	15-30 Min.	30-90 Min.
40°-50°	30-60 Min.	1-3 Hrs.
50°-60°	1-2 Hrs.	1-6 Hrs.
60°-70°	2-7 Hrs.	2-40 Hrs.
70°-80°	3-12 Hrs.	Indefinitely
Over-80°	Indefinitely	

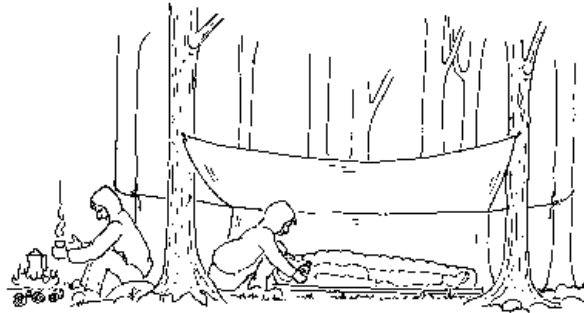
**For Hypothermia danger on land:**

		WIND CHILL INDEX							
Estimated Wind Speed in MPH		Thermometer Reading (°F)							
		50	40	30	20	10	0	-10	-20
		Feels Like Temperature (°F)							
Calm		50	40	30	20	10	0	-10	-20
5		48	37	27	16	6	-5	-15	-26
10		40	28	16	4	-9	-21	-33	-46
15		36	22	9	-5	-18	-36	-45	-58
20		32	18	4	-10	-25	-39	-53	-67
25		30	16	0	-15	-29	-44	-59	-74
30		28	13	-2	-18	-33	-48	-63	-79
35		27	11	-4	-20	-35	-49	-67	-82
40		26	10	-6	-21	-37	-53	-69	-85

Danger from freezing of exposed flesh                      Little Danger                      Increasing Danger

**Treatment in Field:**

Raise victim's body temperature with dry clothing, shelter, insulation  
*(sleeping bag, blankets etc.)*  
 and  
 applied heat  
*(hot water bottles, your own warm body)*



**Caution!** Be careful not to burn skin with hot water.  
 Give warm liquids to drink only if you are sure victim is conscious and can swallow

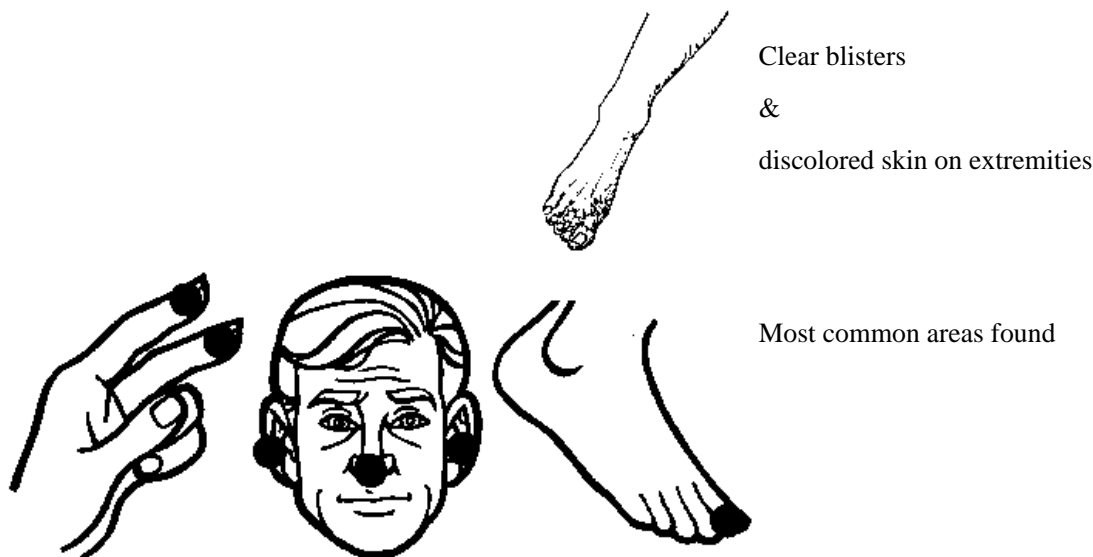


**Frostbite**

Frostbite is the freezing of a part of the body, most often the nose, ears, cheeks, fingers or toes.

**Causes of frostbite:**

- Cold stress
- Low temperatures
- Wind chill
- Poor insulation
- Tight-fitting clothing or boots
- dehydration



Remove victim from cold exposure, remove clothing from affected body parts.  
If warm water is available, put parts in warm water until thawed & numbness decreases  
- Wrap parts in dry, clean gauze & seek medical attention as soon as possible.

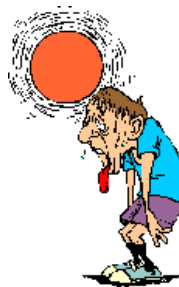
**Do not rub affected areas!**

**Caution!**

**Once you warm a body part you must keep it warm.**  
**If you cannot protect it from freezing again, it is better to leave it frozen until you can.**



## Heat-Related Emergencies



If it is hot, you may be the victim of heat cramps, heat exhaustion or, in extreme cases, heat stroke.

*(**Note:** An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure - drink plenty of liquids to avoid heat-related emergencies.)*

**Heat Cramps:** These are the least serious & usually occur in the leg muscles due to loss of body salts from heavy perspiration - Move to a cool place, rest, affected muscle & drink water (cold water if available).

**Heat Exhaustion:** This can become serious & is indicated by cold, clammy skin, slightly elevated temperature & possibly loss of consciousness - Move immediately to cool place & elevate legs, give cool water, and seek medical attention ASAP.

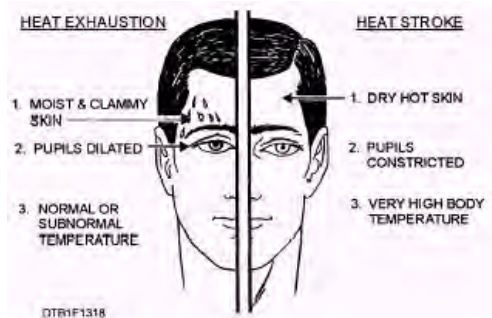
**Heat Stroke:** This is the most serious heat-related problem, & the typical symptoms are hot, dry or wet skin, 105° temperature or higher, usually loss of consciousness - Move immediately to cool place & elevate head & shoulders. After victim is cooled, transport immediately to nearest medical facility -

**Heat Stroke is life-threatening!**

## Caution!

**Be careful not to give liquids orally  
if victim is unconscious or cannot swallow.**

Compare heat stroke symptoms with those of heat exhaustion in the figure below:



Children are more likely than adults to be affected by heat and sunlight. They can more quickly lose body fluid and become dehydrated or develop heat stroke. Their sensitive skin also can be burned more easily by the sun's ultraviolet rays. Children can also be burned by objects or surfaces, particularly metal surfaces, that have been heated by the sun.

Overexposure to the sun's harmful rays during childhood has been linked to skin and other cancers later in life. To reduce injuries caused by heat and sun:

- 📌 Limit the time that children spend outdoors during the hottest part of the day ( 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.)
- 📌 Parents should provide sun block lotion with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 if children will be spending more than a few minutes in the sun.
- 📌 Provide drinks for children before, during, and after playing outdoors.
- 📌 Require that children wear protective clothing if they will be exposed to the sun for extended periods, such as on a field trip outdoors.

Hats or sun visors, long-sleeved shirts and pants, and sun block lotion will prevent burns to sensitive skin.

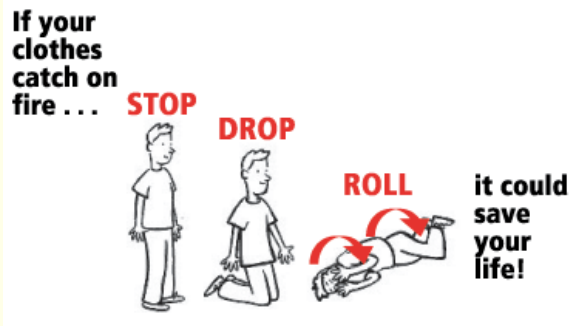
**Keep children under 1 year of age  
out of direct sunlight.**

**Do not use sunscreen on babies  
under 6 months of age  
(a baby is likely to absorb more of the product  
through its skin than an older child would).**



## Burns

Most burns in the woods are thermal (heat) burns, caused by fire, over-exposure to sunlight, certain chemicals & hot surfaces or substances.



and **COOL**

**STOP** immediately where you are.

**DROP** to the ground.

**ROLL** over and over and over, covering your face and mouth with your hands  
(*this will prevent flames from burning your face and smoke from entering your lungs*).  
Roll over and over and over until the flames are extinguished.

**COOL** the burn with cool water for 10-15 minutes.

If needed, see a doctor.

**IF ANOTHER PERSON IS ATTEMPTING TO ASSIST SOMEONE WHO'S CLOTHES ARE ON FIRE,  
SMOTHER THE FLAMES WITH A BLANKET, RUG, OR HEAVY COAT.  
CALL FOR HELP, AND ADMINISTER FIRST AID.**

For measuring body surface, the palm of your hand is about 1%



**What to do:**

- 📌 Determine the severity of burn (first, second & third degree burns increase in amount of skin layers destroyed)

1st degree - Red/pink, hot skin

2nd degree - Red/skin blisters

3rd degree - Deep layers/charred skin

- 📌 Remove clothing from burned area  
(if burns aren't severe)

- 📌 Douse with cool water until pain stops



RUN COOL WATER OVER A BURN FOR 10 - 15 MINUTES.

**NEVER APPLY ICE.**

IT IS DANGEROUS TO PUT BUTTER OR ANY OTHER GREASE ON A BURN BECAUSE IT SEALS IN THE HEAT, AND CAN DAMAGE THE TISSUE FURTHER.  
IF THE BURNED SKIN BLISTERS OR IS CHARRED, SEE A DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY.



The product above is a ointment that my wife's family introduced to us from England, it is now found in the states.  
**I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THIS OINTMENT!!!!**  
**IT WORKS FAST!!!!**

📌 Cover with dry, nonstick, sterile dressing, keep area clean

📌 Watch for signs of infection & dehydration

📌 If burn is over more than 15% of body, or appears to be deep (second or third degree)  
**- seek medical attention immediately**

## **Do not:**

**Do not** Apply ice

**Do not** Break blisters if it can be avoided

**Do not** Apply any type of salve, ointment, sprays or creams

**Do not** Pull or cut away clothing around deep burns



## Food Poisoning

### **The Unwelcome Dinner Guest**

*by Mike Yudizky*

*North Texas Poison Center*

"It must be something I ate". When you think of a hamburger, what comes to mind? Is it a delicious treat - hot, juicy and fresh from the grill? Or do you imagine "Montezuma's Revenge" or some other unwelcome gastrointestinal upset? The prime causes of food-borne illness are a collection of bacteria with tongue-twisting names like *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Salmonella*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Vibrio vulnificus*, and *Shigella* just to name a few. These organisms can become unwelcome guest at the dinner table. They're in a wide range of foods, including meat, milk and other dairy products, coconut, fresh pasta, spices, chocolate, seafood, and even water.

Egg products, tuna, potato and macaroni salads, and cream-filled pastries harboring these pathogens also are implicated in food-borne illnesses, as are vegetables grown in soil fertilized with contaminated manure.

Poultry is the food most often contaminated with disease-causing organisms. It has been estimated that 60 percent or more of raw poultry sold at retail probably carries some disease-causing bacteria. Bacteria are also often found in raw seafood such as oysters, clams, mussels, and scallops.

But that doesn't mean you should stop eating. Just be smart about how you buy, store, prepare and serve food, and you'll reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses. Careless food handling sets the stage for the growth of

disease-causing "bugs." For example, hot or cold foods left standing too long at room temperature provides an ideal climate for bacteria to grow. Improper cooking also plays an important role in food-borne illness.

Foods may be cross contaminated when cutting boards and kitchen tools that have been used to prepare a contaminated food, such as raw chicken, are not cleaned before being used for another food such as vegetables.

**Be wary of food poisoning.**

**Contaminated food can cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Food poisoning usually resolves itself within 24 hours without medical treatment. Drink lots of fluids (mostly water for 12 hours and then add juices, broth . . .). Seek medical attention if symptoms lasts longer than 2 days, if watery diarrhea occurs every 10-15 minutes, if diarrhea contains blood or mucus or if abdominal pain or fever is constant.**

**When camping, remember the following;**

- wash your hands thoroughly before handling food
- smell the food first. If it doesn't smell right, don't cook it and don't eat it.
- it is better to "overcook" than "undercook" food (*surface bacteria are killed at 212°F*)
  - once meat has thawed, cook it  
don't refreeze it!
  - serve cooked food immediately
- avoid food that nourish bacteria (*custard, mayonnaise, custards, bologna . . .*)

**Symptoms**

Common symptoms of food-borne illness include diarrhea, abdominal cramping, fever, headache, vomiting, and severe exhaustion. However, symptoms will vary according to the type of bacteria and by the amount of contaminants eaten. Symptoms may come on as early as a half-hour after eating the contaminated food or they may not develop for several days or weeks. They usually last only a day or two, but in some cases can persist a week to 10 days. For most healthy people, food-borne illnesses are neither long lasting nor life threatening.

When symptoms are severe, the victim should see a doctor or get emergency help. For mild cases of food poisoning, liquid intake should be maintained to replace fluids lost through vomiting and diarrhea. Sport drinks (or Pedialyte for small children), are especially good because they contain much-needed electrolytes.

**Prevention Tips**

The idea that food on the dinner table can make someone sick may be disturbing, but there are many steps you can take to protect your family and dinner guest. It's just a matter of following basic rules of food safety.

Prevention of food poisoning starts with your trip to the supermarket. Don't buy food in cans that are bulging or dented or jars that are cracked or have loose or bulging lids. Look for expiration dates and never buy outdated food. Check the "use by" or "sell by" date on dairy products and pick the ones that will stay fresh longest in your refrigerator. Choose eggs that are Grade A or better and that are refrigerated in the store. Make sure that none are cracked or leaking.

Save to the last frozen foods and perishables such as meat, poultry or fish. Always put these products in separate plastic bags so that drippings don't contaminate other foods in your shopping cart. Take an ice chest along to keep frozen and perishable foods cold if it will take more than an hour to get your groceries home.

**Safe Storage**

The first rule of food storage in the home is to refrigerate or freeze perishables right away. Refrigerator temperature should be 40 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit and the freezer should be zero. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers in covered shallow (less than 2 inches deep) containers as soon as possible and always within 2 hours of cooking. Arrange items in the refrigerator or freezer to allow cold air to circulate freely. "When In Doubt, Throw It Out"

**Preparation**



Wash hands with hot soapy water for at least 20 seconds before preparing, serving and eating food. People with open cuts, sores, vomiting or diarrhea should not handle food. Clean all food preparation surfaces that will come in contact with food. Wash fresh fruits or vegetables with plain water before eating or cooking. Wash hands, utensils, plates, cutting boards and countertops after contact with raw meat or poultry. Use plastic cutting boards rather than wooden ones where bacteria can hide in grooves. Serve cooked food on clean platters with clean utensils. Keep dishwashing sponges clean. Thaw frozen meat or poultry in the refrigerator or microwave, not on the countertop. Bacteria can grow on the outer layers of the food before the inside thaws. Always marinate food in the refrigerator.

### **Cooking**

Cook at recommended temperatures to kill bacteria: poultry-180 degrees F, beef-160 degrees F and pork-160 degrees F. Don't taste meat, poultry, eggs, fish or any other food of animal origin when it is raw or during cooking. Cook eggs until the yolk and whites are firm. Cook foods as close to serving time as possible to limit bacterial growth. Cover and reheat leftovers to 165 degrees F before serving.



## *Moving A Victim*

**When faced with the problem of rescuing a person threatened by an emergency, do not take action until you've determined the danger.**

Sometimes it is necessary to move a victim to safety or to a medical facility. Moving a victim can be done in a variety of ways. The safest way is to carry the victim on a [stretcher fashioned from poles and blankets](#).

Log roll if you need to turn the victim over.  
Support the neck in case of a spinal cord injury.

Do not pull the body sideways  
Do not twist the body when turning the victim over.

If the victim can walk, put one arm around their waist and with your other arm hold their arm around the back of your neck.



This can also be done with two people supporting the victim.



*If the victim cannot walk . . .*

**Do not move a victim with a suspected spinal injury unless it is necessary to get the victim out of danger.**  
If this is necessary, stabilize the injured part so that it does not move and make the injury worse.

**Remember:**

- Do not make injury worse by moving victim
- Do not move a victim with spinal injury
- Do not leave unconscious victim alone
- Do not move victim without stabilizing the injured part

**Moving a Victim**

Moving a victim can be done in a variety of ways, some of which are shown here:

**Improvised Stretchers**

Standard stretchers should be used whenever possible to transport casualties. If none are available, it may be necessary for you to improvise. Sometimes a blanket may be used as a stretcher. The casualty is placed in the middle of the blanket on his or her back. Four people kneel ([Fig. 1](#)) on each side and roll the edges of the blanket toward the casualty. Stretchers may also be improvised ([Fig. 2](#)) by using two long poles (approx. 7 feet long) and a blanket. Most improvised stretchers do not give sufficient support in cases where there are fractures or extensive wounds of the body!

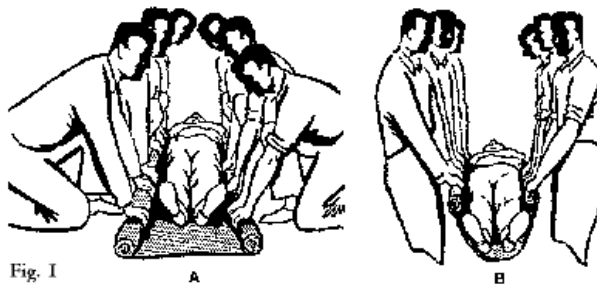


Fig. 1

*Blanket used as improvised transport stretcher.*

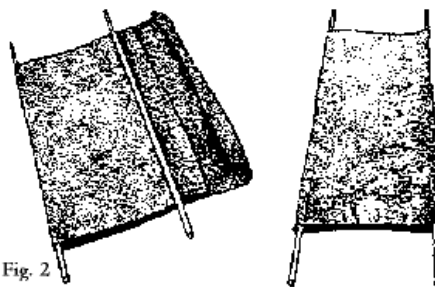


Fig. 2

*Stretcher made from poles and a blanket.*

**Fireman's Carry**

The Fireman's Carry ([Fig. 3](#)) is one of the easiest ways to carry an unconscious casualty.

1. Place the casualty face down. Face the casualty, and kneel on one knee at the casualty's head. Pass your hands under the armpits; then slide your hands down the sides and grasp them across the back.

[see Fig. 3-1](#)

2. Raise the casualty to his knees. Take a better hold across the casualty's back.

[see Fig. 3-2](#)

3. Raise the casualty to a standing position and place your right leg between the casualty's legs. Grasp the right wrist in your left hand and swing the arm around the back of your neck and down your left shoulder.

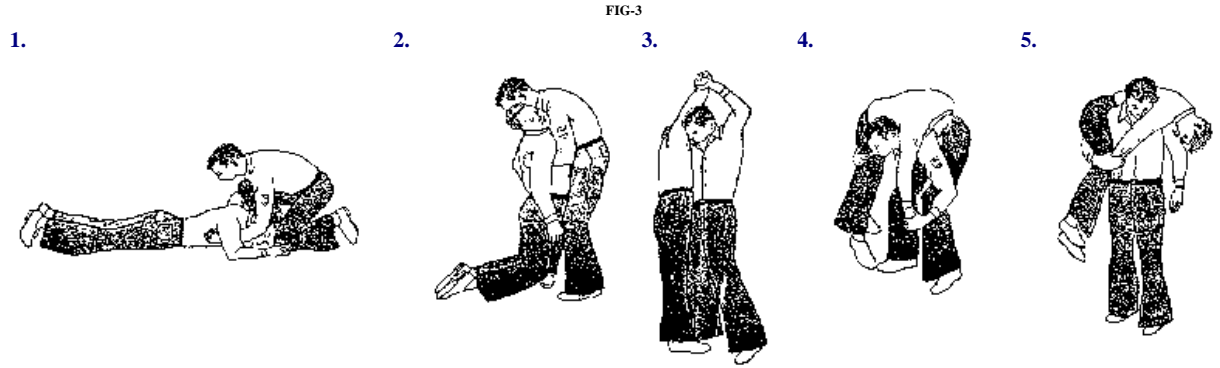
[see Fig. 3-3](#)

4. Stoop quickly and pull the casualty across your shoulders and, at the same time, put your right arm between the casualty's legs.

[see Fig. 3-4](#)

5. Grasp the casualty's right wrist with your right hand and straighten up. The procedure for lowering the casualty to the deck is also illustrated. Do not attempt if the casualty has an injured arm, leg, ribs, neck, or back!

[see Fig. 3-5](#)

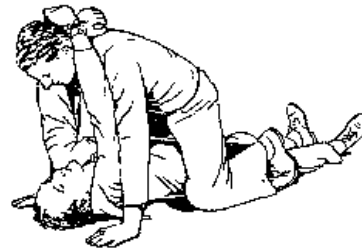


### Placing The Victim Back Down from a Fireman's Carry



### Tied-Hands Crawl

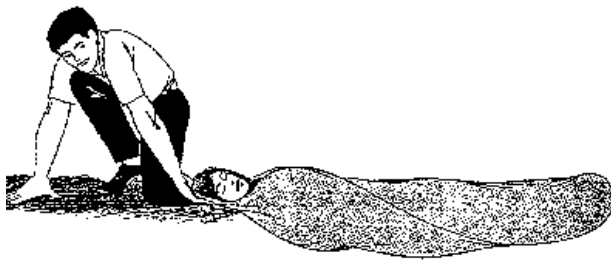
The tied-hands crawl may be used to drag an unconscious casualty for a short distance. It is particularly useful when you must crawl underneath a low structure, but it is the least desirable because the casualty's head is not supported.



1. Place the casualty face up. Cross the casualty's wrists and tie them together.
2. Kneel astride the casualty and lift the arms over your head so that the casualty's wrists are at the back of your neck.
3. When you crawl forward, raise your shoulders high enough so that the casualty's head will not bump against the deck.

### Blanket Drag

The blanket drag can be used to move a casualty who, due to the seriousness of the injury, should not be lifted or carried by one person alone.



1. Place the casualty face up on a blanket, and pull the blanket along the deck.
2. Always pull the casualty head first, with the head and shoulders slightly raised, so that the head will not bump against the deck.

### **Pack-Strap Carry**

The pack-strap carry can be used to move a heavy casualty for some distance.



1. Place the casualty face up.
2. Lie down on your side along the casualty's uninjured or less injured side. Your shoulder should be next to the casualty's armpit.
3. Pull the casualty's far leg over your own, holding it there if necessary.
4. Grasp the casualty's far arm at the wrist and bring it over your upper shoulder as you roll and pull the casualty onto your back.
5. Rise up on your knees, using your free arm for balance and support. Hold both of the casualty's wrists close against your chest with your other hand.
6. Lean forward as you rise to your feet, and keep both of your shoulders under the casualty's armpits.

**Do not attempt if the casualty has an injured arm, ribs, neck, or back!**

### **Arm Carries**

There are several kinds of arm carries that can be used in emergency situations to move a casualty to safety.

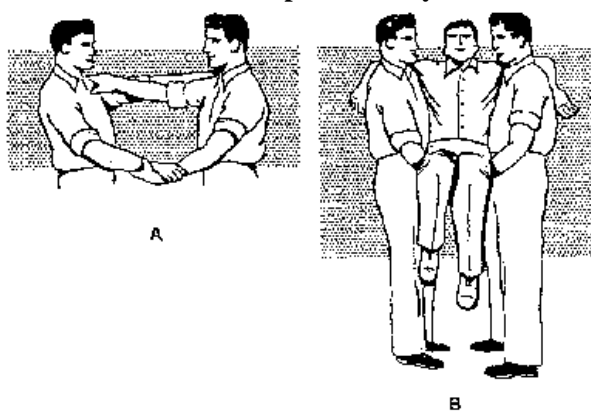
#### **The one-person arm carry**



**should not be used to carry a casualty who is seriously injured.**

Unless the casualty is considerably smaller than you, you will not be able to carry the casualty very far.

### The two-person carry



1. Two rescuers kneel beside the casualty at the level of the hips, and carefully raise them to a sitting position.
2. Each rescuer puts one arm under the casualty's thighs; hands are clasped and arms are braced.
3. Both rescuers rise slowly to a standing position.

**Do not attempt if the casualty is seriously injured!**



## Bites & Stings

[Click Here for](#)



### Animal Bites

Extremely rare while camping.  
But if you are bitten & skin is broken,  
[wash wound with soap & water.](#)  
[Apply pressure to control bleeding.](#)

If the attack was unprovoked, consider the possibility of rabies.

Notify authorities as soon as possible.

**Seek medical attention if needed.**

## Hornets, bees, wasps and yellow jackets

are the bane of many an outdoorsperson.

Just when you thought you were sitting down for a nice picnic lunch or a mid-hike snack, in come the buzzing squadrons.

The fear of a sting motivates most to swing and swat wildly, and yet that is the worst thing that you can do.

### **Avoid attracting undue attention by following a few simple guidelines.**

- Dress in light-colored clothing. Studies have shown that black, red and blue are more attractive since bees and their other stinging cousins see in ultraviolet.
- Do not wear perfume or cologne as the sweet smell seems to attract insects of all kinds.
- When planning a picnic, keep in mind that fruit, red meat, sodas and food packed in heavy syrup are like ringing the dinner bell for hornets, yellow jackets, bees and wasps.
- Should a stinging insect make frequent fly-bys through your personal space, resist the urge to wave wildly and swat blindly. Instead, use a gentle pushing or brushing motion to deter the incursion. Wasps, bees, hornets and yellow jackets don't react kindly to quick movements.

### **What should you do if stung?**

Cool the sting area with a cold compress.

If you were stung by a bee, scrape the stinger out with the edge of a knife (don't cut yourself) or your fingernail. A product called the Sawyer Extractor works very nicely here as it uses suction to remove the bee venom and stinger.

**Do not attempt to grab the stinger and pull it out as you will only inject more venom into skin by compressing the venom sack.**

If the pain persists, add a topical ointment such as benzocaine to the site to numb it. An over the counter antihistamine such as [Benadryl](#) will alleviate some of the swelling and itch as well.

If the allergic reaction goes beyond mild swelling, or if there are numerous stings to the face and hands, then seek medical attention quickly.

A serious allergic reaction with massive swelling is life-threatening and should be treated as such.

**More on Bee Stings**



[Click Here](#)



## Blisters

Blisters are actually localizing second degree burns caused by heat or friction. They are mostly found on the feet and are the most common cause for evacuation on backcountry trips. If people are aware and take care of their feet, then blisters can easily be avoided, or at least caught soon and treated before they become a serious problem.

### **Prevention**

Always make sure your footwear fits properly and is broken in to YOUR foot. I know someone who bought a used pair of boots that were in real good condition from someone else, but didn't wear them at all before a backpacking trip. He thought that because they were already broken in he

wouldn't get blisters. Boy was he wrong. You need to get your boots broken in so that they are molded to your foot before you go on any trip that requires hiking. If you are one of those people that get blisters no matter what you do to prevent them, I have the perfect solution: duct tape. Just take a piece of duct tape, and stick it to the spot on your foot where you get blisters, and voila, no more blisters! The duct tape acts as sort of a lubricant for your foot, kind, of like what oil does for your car. Your boot slides against the duct tape, not your foot, so therefore, there is no friction between your foot and the boot, and therefore, no blisters. But if you are one of those duct tape haters, or for whatever reason you won't put duct tape on your feet, there are other ways of preventing blisters. One of those ways is to wear more than one pair of socks. The best combination of socks is a thin polypropylene liner sock, with a thick wool or synthetic outer sock. The polypropylene wicks moisture away from your feet, keeping them nice and toasty and dry, and the wool or synthetic outer sock will absorb the moisture, and then eventually, the moisture will be evaporated. The two layers of socks also transfers the friction from your feet to the socks, which reduces the chance of blisters. The only drawback, is on a hot summer day, your feet will get a little too hot for comfort. That's when I call on the duct tape. To keep your sock from bunching up in the toes of your boots, keep your boots laced up snugly against your foot to prevent your foot from sliding forward in your boot.

## Treatment for Hot Spots

A hot spot always comes before a blister. So if you feel a hot spot, STOP! You need to stop, and treat the hot spot before it forms into a nasty blister. This is easily done by placing a piece of duct tape over the hot spot. One way to pack duct tape with you on a backpacking trip where packing space is limited, is to wrap your water bottle in duct tape. This not only keeps you from lugging around that giant roll of tape, but it insulates your water bottle keeping the water cool in the summer and not frozen in the winter. To keep the duct tape from peeling up on the corners as all tape usually does when it is placed on the bottom of a foot and walked on, just round the edges so that there are no corners to peel up. The ingenious of it all.

## Treatment for Blisters

First of all, if you get a blister, you are foolish for not preventing it easily with duct tape, or treating the hot spot that occurred only moments before, so you probably deserve the blister. Remember, no blister is good blister. But now that you have a blister, it must be treated properly so that it doesn't pop and become infected. Here's your chance to redeem yourself from that foolish nickname you acquired. First off, the liquid in the blister is sterile, and as long as the blister has not been popped, it is a closed wound, and therefore, infection is impossible. To keep the wound closed, you need something thicker than ordinary duct tape. Moleskin works great for this (partly because blister treatment is what moleskin was invented for). Cut a square of moleskin large enough so that it covers the blister, and has an extra inch to two inches of moleskin surrounding the blister. Fold the moleskin in half. On the folded edge, cut a half circle the size of the blister. Open the moleskin up, and pee off the adhesive back. Place the moleskin over the blister so that the blister is in the hole of the moleskin. Do this again with a second piece of mole skin of the same proportions, and stick on top of the first piece for extra padding.

If the blister is so severe that you absolutely cannot walk on it, even with moleskin, and evacuation is not available at the current time, then you will need to pop the blister to continue your trip. Take a sterile needle, and pop the blister at the blister's edge where the blister meets the foot, not in the middle of the blister. Gently squeeze the liquid out of the blister. Because you have just popped the blister, you have upgraded the blister from a closed wound, to an open wound. Dry the surrounding skin, and bandage the blister to keep out bacteria and to prevent infection. To bandage a blister on the bottom of your foot is slightly different from bandaging other wounds. There is no other liquids being secreted by the wound, so extra padding is not necessary. Simply place a piece of gauze over the wound, and then wrap tape around your foot and over the gauze. Make as many wraps as necessary to keep the gauze in place. If possible, change into polypropylene socks, for they will wick away moisture from your feet, keeping them dry. Change the bandage twice a day.



## Trench Foot

The name "trenchfoot" came from World War I, when the troops stood in cold, wet trenches for days without relief. It is sometimes, today, called "immersion foot," nerve and muscle damage that results from prolonged

exposure to moisture and/or cold without ice formation (as in frostbite) in the cells of the affected area.

Trenchfoot is encouraged by poor nutrition, dehydration, wet socks, inadequate clothing, and the constriction of healthy blood flow in the feet by too-tight shoes and socks. People who sweat heavily are more susceptible, but everyone can prevent trenchfoot by paying attention to their feet. Keep a dry pair of socks on hand at all times, preferably packed in a plastic bag to make sure they stay dry. Make sure your boots fit with plenty of room for the socks you choose to wear. Don't add more socks if your feet get cold--get bigger boots, or boots with more insulation, or add insulation to the outside of your boots with gaiters.

Trenchfoot is divided into three phases.

**Phase one** is the period of time when blood vessels are contracted by the cold and wetness inside the shoe or boot, and too little oxygen is carried to the cells of the foot. The foot is cold to the touch, slightly swollen, slightly discolored, numb, maybe a little tender to touch. When the foot is rewarmed, the damaged tissue usually looks red, and feels sensitive, and the discomfort may last from hours to days.

**Phase two** is the period when the cells of the foot have become damaged by the lack of adequate circulation. When the blood vessels open back up, the tissue swells with excess fluid. Patients complain of tingling pain that never lets up. A foot check will reveal swelling. On rewarming, blisters form, and, later, ulcers where the blisters have fallen off revealing dead tissue underneath. In severe cases, gangrene will result. Suffering may last from 2 to 6 weeks, and medications for pain are often prescribed.

**Phase three** may last weeks to months. The swelling subsides, and the foot takes on a normal appearance once again. During this phase, the patient may complain of increased perspiration in the foot, increased sensitivity to cold, and varying degrees of pain, itching, and paresthesia (a creeping, tingling, prickly feeling). The damaged foot may be more susceptible to cold injury in the future.

Here's what should be done if you think you, or a companion, is developing trenchfoot. Stop and carefully dry the cold foot or feet. If the foot looks dirty, carefully wash it before drying it. Keep it elevated above the level of the foot-owner's heart while you gently rewarm the foot with passive skin-to-skin contact. No rubbing or placing the foot near a strong heat source such as a fire or stove, both of which can damage the tissue of the cold foot. Start the patient on a regimen of over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drugs (aspirin or, even better, ibuprofen), following the directions on the label.

Remember it will probably take 24 to 48 hours before the severity of the damage is fully apparent. If you end up with a painful, obviously swollen foot that develops blisters, that patient needs the attention of a physician. Whether or not that patient can walk out to a physician will be determined by the patient. If they can do it, let them.

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## HOW TO CHOOSE A KIT



A well equipped first aid kit should be kept in both your home and your car, and should accompany you on trips whether they be civilized tours or backcountry camping.

A first aid kit is one of the most important items to have when doing any sort of outdoor activity.

A first aid kit is ranked up there with toilet paper.

Neither of these should be left home when out in the wilderness.



Always carry a first-aid kit designed for the number of people in your group.

Weight and space considerations are significant to your purchase decision and an increasing number of kits come in a variety of sizes and shapes designed with a sport-specific intent. For example, a soft triangular shaped kit for cyclists that fits securely between the bike's top and down tube with Velcro fasteners. Most cases are soft, making them more convenient to pack and lighter weight. Those for car and home use frequently have a hard case.

Size is determined by the number of people it supports and the types of products included. There are individual, family, and group kits designed to equip you for basic home and car needs, or for remote locations and travel.

### ***COMMON TREATMENTS***

The most common problems are insect bites, wounds, blisters, sunburn, asthma, allergic reactions and lacerations.

Proper management of abrasions and open wounds involves three steps;

1. Stop serious blood loss
2. Clean adequately to prevent infection
3. Maintain an environment around the wound that will prevent further damage and promote healing.


Strains and sprains are best treated with the easy to remember formula RICE; which stands for rest, ice, compression, and elevation.

### ***WHAT'S IN A KIT?***

There is nothing in a prepackaged first aid kit that you cannot buy separately.

Starting with a good kit will save you money but you will still have to purchase additional items.

**All kits are not created equal!**

 **FIRST AID MANUAL** - a guide to the treatment of the most common and serious emergencies. Almost everything in your first-aid kit is designed to ease the pain and speed the healing, of relatively simple problems, but unless you know how to use the products, they are useless.

If you are not up to date with first aid treatment, a handbook on first aid would be useful

A good resource for first aid is the Boy Scout first aid merit badge book. It can be found at any scout supply store or at most of your neighborhood craft stores, or sometimes at army navy surplus stores.

It's cheap and has a lot of useful information for the medically illiterate folk.

It is important to know how to use everything in your first-aid kit beforehand.

You won't have time in the middle of an emergency to read an instruction manual.

When an accident occurs, ...  
you need to be prepared.

Often very basic first aid knowledge can help to save a life. Completing a First Aid Course is a sensible investment for your family and it's really interesting and fun too.

📌 **DISPOSABLE GLOVES** - when treating anyone, bleeding or not, gloves keep your germs out of the wound and the other person's germs out of you. Vinyl gloves are less expensive, but prone to leaking, so Latex gloves are still the best choice.

📌 **CPR SHIELDS** - protect a person while administering artificial breathing (*mouth to mouth*). They are compact and lightweight with a one-way valve that protects from infection.

📌 **THERMOMETERS** - to monitor an illness and determine its severity. A special thermometer is necessary to register low temperatures as experienced during hypothermia.

📌 **RESEALABLE PLASTIC BAGS** - hold ice, snow, or cold water for cooling strains and sprains.

📌 **MINERAL ICE** - topically applied, cold-inducing gel for reducing pain and swelling caused by a strain, sprain, fracture, or other injury.

📌 **PAIN RELIEVERS** - treatment for pain, inflammation, and fever. Ibuprofen is the preferred choice for inflammation reduction. Tylenol will reduce fever and relieves pain, but it does nothing for decreasing inflammation that can occur from a sprain or strain. Ibuprofen (Nuprin, Motrin, Advil) is the preferred choice for inflammation reduction. Benadryl is often included in today's kits as a treatment for mild allergic reactions, but medical doctors assert that if you are a frequent traveler in the backcountry you would be wise to add epinephrine in the form of an Epi Pen to treat more serious allergic reactions that might otherwise be fatal.

Try to avoid Aspirin as it tends to produce upset stomach

📌 **ORAL REHYDRATION SALTS** - a combination of electrolytes and sugar that is ideal for replenishment of lost body fluids. It must be mixed with water and is far superior to salt tablets that are impossible to digest and frequently induce vomiting.

Salt tablets were the standard for oral re-hydration needs, but what a lousy standard. Salt tablets are virtually impossible to digest and frequently induce vomiting-- not what you want when it is re-hydration you are trying to achieve.

World Health Organization oral re-hydration salt packets for treating diarrhea and dehydration are the standard in most good kits.

📌 **SCISSORS, TWEEZERS OR NEEDLES** - tools to alter bandage size, remove splinters and cut delicately to get at a deeply embedded splinter.

📌 **IRRIGATION SYRINGES** - cleanse a wound via high-pressure using a normal saline solution, diluted Betadine (1%), or purified water.

📌 **SOAP SCRUB SPONGES** - clean dirty abrasions, where the grime is ground into the wound and the irrigation syringe is not fully effective. Use the sponge and aggressively scrub the wound clean. Follow the scrubbing with a clean water flush.

📌 **IODINE OINTMENT** - topical disinfectant to wipe wounds clean after flushing with water from a water bottle or irrigation syringe. Iodine can also be dissolved in unsafe water to create a disinfectant flush. Wait 20 minutes after putting it into the water to ensure full disinfecting action.

📌 **ANTISEPTIC TOWELETTES** - for cleaning very minor wounds. Also for wiping your hands clean before, and after, treating open wounds.

📌 **EYE CUPS** - flush the eye of foreign particles or liquids. They are fine for home kits, but are too heavy and bulky for backpacking.

📌 **TOPICAL ANTIBIOTICS** - topical antibiotics have minimal effect on the lives of germs, but do help and keeping a dab on open wounds helps maintain a moist environment around the wound speeds healing significantly.

📌 **TINCTURE OF BENZOIN** - very sticky and can be swabbed

anywhere tape is used to ensure that the tape stays in place.  
***Benzoin is an irritant and should be kept out of open wounds.***

- 📌 **FABRIC BANDAGES** (Band-aides) - cover small wounds after they have been cleaned.
- 📌 **KNUCKLE BANDAGES** - cover small and difficult-to-bandage scraped knuckles. This bandage allows an almost full range of motion after application.
- 📌 **MICRO- THIN BANDAGES** - similar to a piece of sterile Gore-Tex, it "breathes" while it protects and lets moisture from the wound escape. Once the wound is clean and prepared with the antibiotic ointment, this see-through "window" bandage allows you to monitor the wound for signs of infection. It is important to watch very carefully for these signs or for an excess of fluid buildup. The bandage functions at a slow rate and if fluid builds up underneath, the chances of further skin damage and infection will increase.
- 📌 **ELASTIC BANDAGE** (usually ACE) - for wrapping sprained wrists and ankles, although the support is not ideal unless you use athletic tape as well. Also for holding splints, large bandages and ice packs in place.
- 📌 **TRIANGULAR BANDAGE** (with safety pins) - to sling and swathe upper extremity injuries, such as severe sprains or even fractures. Also used to tie splints and to hold large wound dressing in place. Serves as an excellent pressure bandage, and will work as a tourniquet (as long as you fully understand when and how to do it).
- 📌 **BUTTERFLY CLOSURES OR PROXISTRIPS** - pull the edges of a gaping wound somewhat together before bandaging and until a physician can suture the wound. Proxistrips are thinner and breath better than the old-fashioned butterfly bandages.
- 📌 **GAUZE PADS, COHESIVE & ADHESIVE TAPE** - used to create a very effective cover for larger open wounds. Remember to touch only the edges when you're handling sterile material. A dab of triple antibiotic ointment on the wound first helps prevent the gauze from sticking to the wound. Adhesive tape can also be used on hot spots to prevent blisters.

Since the old days of traditional 4x4 gauze pads, wound dressings have gotten more sophisticated and feature non-adherent designs and hydrogel dressings such as Spenco 2nd skin. Cleansing a wound is now best performed via high-pressure irrigation utilizing an [irrigation syringe](#).

Gone too are the butterfly bandages, replaced by more effective

wound closure strips.

To eliminate sticking problems, be sure that your kit has [tincture of benzoin](#) in it which, when spread on the skin on either side of a wound, serves to help tape and bandages adhere better- useful when the skin is sweaty and dirty.

📌 **NON- ADHERENT DRESSINGS** - designed for wounds that tend to weep excess fluid, they help prevent sticking.

📌 **2ND SKIN DRESSING** - 97% water held together in a gel. It can be used to cover small burns after cleaning, and for the treatment and prevention of blisters. It is best to leave an intact blister alone since it is nature's way of cushioning the raw area and, if still intact, provides a sterile environment.

Build up the surface around the blister with a piece of moleskin by cutting a hole (the size of the blister) in the middle. Apply the second skin to the blister inside this cutout, and then apply tape or a bandage to hold it all in place. Most blisters on hard surfaces, withstanding abrasion (such as on your heel when hiking) will pop anyway. Once this happens, or before if you wish, a blister is best managed by taking the entire top off the blister, washing the area with a mild antiseptic, and applying the 2nd Skin. The 2nd Skin is then held in place with tape.

📌 **SAM SPLINTS** - for nearly every type of orthopedic injury, they can be cut and molded to fit any extremity, can be fashioned into a usable cervical collar, are reusable, aren't affected by temperature extremes, and are X-ray permeable.

📌 **POISON OAK/IVY SOAP** - helps to breakdown the oily resin, making it easier to rinse away. Plain soap, used within 30 minutes after contact, is sometimes effective. Regardless, the sticky resin clings to almost anything and, though you may not have reacted to it last time, a sensitivity can be developed at any time. Handle contaminated clothing, shoes and gear carefully and wash them immediately. The resin can stay active for years!

📌 **ALLERGY MEDICATIONS** (like Benadryl) - help alleviate the pain and itch of bug bites and mild allergic reactions. For backcountry trekking, add epinephrine (by prescription only) to treat more serious, possibly fatal reactions.

📌 **SAWYER EXTRACTORS** - a hand held suction pump that creates powerful suction to remove venom and toxins from insects, snakes, marine, and plant life. No cutting is necessary and it is reusable! The best first aid for a snake bite is to get the victim to a hospital where antivenin can be safely administered.



Ice, electric shock treatment, constriction and those tiny kits with razor-sharp blades and miniature rubber suction cups are not safe, according to wilderness medical experts, and can do much more harm than good when treating for a snake bite.

The Sawyer Extractor is the only snake bite kit that is actually acknowledged as useful in certain situations.

The recommended first aid?

Get the victim to a hospital where antivenin may be given safely.

### BUG REPELLANTS

### TICK REPELLANTS

### SUN SCREENS

Inspect the contents before every trip and make sure the tools are clean and supplies in good condition.

Replace expired medicines and add items you wished you had brought on the last trip.

## **Tips to consider regarding child-specific needs in the outdoors:**

📍 Standard first aid kits carried by families must be adapted to meet infants' and children's special needs. Actual items carried will vary depending on the ages of the children, preexisting medical conditions, length of travel, specific environment traveled in, and the first aid knowledge of the parents.

📍 Infants can develop infections and become hypothermic, hyperthermic, and dehydrated more rapidly than adults or older children. Carry a digital thermometer and the appropriate lubricant for monitoring rectal temperatures. Temperatures 100 degrees F and over require immediate medical attention in a child younger than four months of age. A bulb syringe is also useful because not only because it

can be used to suction mucus from the throat and nasal passages of infants, but also because it may be used to flush foreign bodies from ears and administer enemas.

📌 Blisters bother all ages. Feet should receive attention the minute friction or irritation is noticed. Always leave blisters intact unless infection is suspected. A fluid, gel-laminate (Spenco 2nd Skin) and an adhesive pad is very effective in prevention and treatment of blisters.

📌 Most children under five cannot swallow pills. Chewable medications are preferred. If chewable is not available, liquid will work, but they add excess weight and can leak. Most children can chew tablets once their first molars are present--usually around fifteen months. For children who cannot chew, chewable medications may be crushed between two spoons and mixed in with food.

📌 Reduction of weight and bulk is a primary concern in any first aid kit. One way to do that is to select medications and items that have multiple uses. For example. Desitin, best known for helping to prevent diaper rash is also an excellent sun block as it contains 40-percent zinc oxide.



## Review of Important Principles

Do Not Panic - Stay Calm!

Call for help.

Do not put yourself in danger!

Do not move the victim unless he/she is in danger and the situation is stable for you to enter/help.

Administer necessary first aid.

Reassure the victim and make as comfortable as possible.

Stay with the victim until help arrives.

***Be prepared!***

***Take a CPR course.***

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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## Safety while Camping

*Use your common sense when participating in outdoor activities.*

*Always be prepared for the unexpected.*

*Do not take unnecessary chances. Do not be careless.*

*Think before you act.*

Safety is an issue most people do not think of much past buying a first aid kit, snake bit kit, suntan lotion and/or bug repellent. Safety just is not that popular a subject. This may be doing to the fact that most of us do not identify ourselves with accidents. You have heard the fraise, "Accidents only happen to the other guy".

Tell that to the guy or gal down at that local emergency room, who by the way thought that very thing just before his/her accident. Most accidents are caused by ones own actions.

These very actions can also prevent accidents.

As is at home, camping holds a variety of risks and hazards, more so on a camp trip because most campers are not familiar with all of them.

Care and forethought, can help to anticipate and/or avoid accidents and help in what should be done after an accident.

**Plan the yearly medical and dental exam near the time you**

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**plan to leave on an extended trip.  
This may help to prevent any unseen problems.**

You should not only plan to take a first aid kit, snakebite kit, and suntan lotion and/or bug repellent, but also learn how to use them.

That way if something should happen, treatment would not have to wait.

It is well worth the money to buy the latest copy of the American Red Cross First Aid manual.

It contains most everything you will need to temporarily treat injuries.


Keep in mind, this manual is not a replacement to professional medical treatment.

**[General Safety](#)**

**[Weather Safety](#)**

**[Medical](#)**

**[Fire](#)**

** Be prepared to administer basic [first aid and CPR](#).**

** Carry a [Basic First Aid Kit](#)**

Your kit can prove invaluable if you or a member of your group suffers a cut, bee sting or allergic reaction. Pack antiseptics for cuts and scrapes, tweezers, insect repellent, bug spray, a snake bite kit, pain relievers, and sunscreen.

\*Take a First Aid class and a CPR class -- keep current on this information

\*[Learn the ABC's of treating emergencies](#).

Recognizing serious injuries will enable you to attend to a victim until medical help arrives.

\*Keep supplies in a well marked, durable, waterproof container

\*Keep the contents organized

\*Know how to use everything in your first aid kit

\*Inspect content often, re-supply as needed

\*Keep readily available at all times

## **Never approach wild animals**

They may look cute and harmless enough but they are very unpredictable and can be very territorial and protective.

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings.

In most cases, the animals are more afraid of us and will run away. Do not attempt to feed wild animals.

Most injuries occur when people try to feed them.

Keep your food safely stored away.

### **Do not keep food in your tent.**

*Parents & Kids, remove all junk food from your pockets before going to bed!!!*

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

## **Look out for [snakes](#), [spiders](#) and [other critters](#)**

Watch where you are walking, be careful when picking up sticks or rocks and look around before taking a seat.

Again, snakes are usually more afraid of us, but if they feel threatened or if you make sudden movements they may strike.

Stay calm and slowly move away from them.

## **Other insects**

such as [bees](#), [ants](#), [ticks](#), [mosquitoes](#), [etc.](#), should not be taken lightly.

Not only can they be annoying but they can cause quite a bit of pain and discomfort.

Many people have severe allergic reactions to their bites and need to carry necessary medical supplies or seek medical attention. Again be aware of your surroundings.

[Refer to Keeping the Bugs Away for more details.](#)

## **[Beware of poisonous plants](#)**

Familiarize yourself with any dangerous plants that are common to the area.

If you come into contact with a poisonous plant, immediately rinse the affected area with water and apply a soothing lotion such as calamine to the affected area.

## **Wear sunscreen and sunglasses**

You can get sunburn in a very short period of time even on

overcast days. Protect your eyes from the strong ultraviolet rays of the sun and reduce glare from off the water or off the snow.

Sunburn can ruin any vacation.


[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

 **Never hike alone,**  
always go with a friend.

Tell someone else of your plans.  
Always take plenty of water, snacks, matches and a flashlight.

Don't forget your compass and trail maps.

[Be aware of the weather.](#)

 **Supervise your children**

Instruct them to stay within your sight and don't allow them to wonder off.  
Give them each a whistle to wear around their neck to be used only in an emergency.

Agree on a location to meet.

Consider ID bracelets.  
Keep a picture of your children with you in case they get lost.

 **Be careful around water**

Watch your step and don't take chances.  
Watch your children closely.  
Everyone should know how to swim.

 [Pay attention to weather conditions](#)

It can change very quickly.  
Be prepared and act in anticipation of severe weather.  
In the winter, watch out for extended exposure to cold temperatures. Frostbite and hypothermia are very dangerous.  
Keep an eye on each other.

## **Be very careful with gas canisters**

Keep upright at all times.

Keep outside in well ventilated area.

Check for leakage by putting soap liquid on all connections.


Turn off when not in use.

Never install or remove propane cylinders while stove is lit, near flames, pilot lights, other ignition sources or while stove is hot to the touch.

Be careful not to spill fuel.

Use funnel to fill tank

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

 Do not operate stove or store fuel containers around another heat source such as a campfire.

Only operate the stove in open, well ventilated areas.









Never use the stove in a tent or a confined area.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)

## **Replenish your ice often**

Keep your food cold at all times to avoid food spoilage and [food poisoning](#).

## **Practice good fire safety**

-  Clear area of all debris/avoid area with overhanging branches
-  Construct a fire ring surrounded by rocks
-  Have a bucket of water, shovel and a fire extinguisher nearby and ready to put out a fire
-  **NEVER** build a fire near tents or other flammable items.
-  **NEVER** use flammable fluids to start a fire.
-  **NEVER** leave fire unattended.
-  Build a fire only as big as you need.
-  Make sure to completely extinguish fire.



ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES.

 Closely supervise your dog around children, other visitors and other dogs.

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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Weather Safety

*Campers and other outdoor enthusiasts know that weather plays a major role in their activities. In most instances, weather factors in to the enjoyment level of the given activity, not how safe it is. But severe weather events like flash floods and blizzards can put the camper in a life-threatening situation. Being aware of the weather and its potential dangers is a common sense approach to planning any outdoor activity, especially camping, and following a few basic precautions will help you avoid these potential dangers and better enjoy time spent outdoors.*

#### Weather Information

Today people have more access to fast and accurate weather information than ever before through the Internet, cable television and radio. Watching or listening to these sources is the first step in planning a safe and enjoyable outdoor excursion. The ever-changing weather patterns should be monitored before the trip as well as intermittently during the trip.

Presetting your car's radio with the stations that provide regular weather broadcasts and periodically listening in will alert you to changing forecasts. As you approach your specific destination, look for highway signs that indicate weather stations in the area. This is especially important if that destination will be far away from areas that easily receive radio transmissions. Take along a portable, battery-powered radio or have one handy in the vehicle or boat. Listen to weather updates on AM stations particularly because AM signals travel farther than FM signals, especially at night.

## Packing For The Weather

Another preplanning step is to pack for inclement weather. Be sure to take along plenty of extra clothing, rain gear, gloves, warming equipment, a flashlight, backup batteries, a first aid kit, blankets or sleeping bags and liquid refreshments, either hot or cold. If traveling in very cold weather, try to keep your gas tank level above half-full so the water in your tank does not freeze up the fuel lines.

## Dangerous Weather Events

The camper's worst enemy can sometimes be nature itself. Be aware of the signs of extreme weather heading toward you and what to do in that event. Dangerous weather events include thunderstorms, lightning, severe thunder or hail storms, flash floods, high winds, tornadoes, hurricanes and blizzards. In all of these situations, it's best to remain as calm as possible in order to think clearly and quickly secure safe surroundings. In a state of panic, it's easy to make mistakes in judgment that can lead to worse outcomes than the weather event itself.

Be particularly wary of approaching storms that look like this squall line. Violent winds are very likely.



*Vehicles rush to beat the storms approaching from the north. This is an example of a typical squall line with strong straight line winds, heavy rain and hail. The leading edge of the clouds brings a cold wind shift coming out of the storm. The cold air works like a shovel scooping up moisture and forming new convection and storms on the leading edge of the outflow.*





### **When a severe storm approaches or a warning is issued . . .**

- Get off exposed ridges and hills, out of canyons and ravines, and away from streams.
  - Abandon campers, RVs, and tents. They offer no protection from tornadoes and violent thunderstorm winds.
  - Move to a pre-designated shelter if available.
  - Go to the lowest floor and stay away from windows.
    - If no strong shelter is available, get away from the largest trees, particularly dead or diseased trees.
  - The downwind side of a high rock outcrop may offer some protection from falling trees.

However, there is danger of falling rock and of lightning which can ricochet off the rocks and even enter caves causing injury or death.

- NOAA Weather Radio will help you assess your risks. Protection from both lightning and violent winds involves tough compromises.
- Realize that you may minimize your exposure risk but not eliminate it. Given only the choice of field, lake, or woods during violent thunderstorm winds, the field and lake will likely present unacceptable lightning risks whereas the woods present risk of injury from falling trees. To minimize the lightning and falling tree risk, your best bet may be a low area of small trees surrounded by larger trees. Position yourself within the small tree area beyond the fall radius of the surrounding large trees. Even so, be prepared for violent winds and wind-driven rain, hail, and branches.

- If a tornado approaches and shelter is not available, lie flat in a nearby ditch.

## **Flash FLOODS**

Most flash flooding is caused by slow-moving thunderstorms or storms repeatedly moving over the same area.

Heavy rain anywhere in the drainage basin above you can quickly turn dry washes and small streams into raging rivers. Saturated soils and thin soils are more prone to flash flooding due to their lack of absorption.

Avoid camping or hiking along streams, in gullies or ravines, and in canyons if thunderstorms are forecast or occurring.

### **If flooding is occurring or a warning is issued . . .**

- Go to higher ground but beware of lightning.
- Do not attempt to cross flowing streams.
- Never drive through flooded roadways.  
Six inches of fast-flowing water can sweep you and your car away!
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

### **Go Prepared!**

Hikers and campers may be exposed to hazardous weather - lightning, flooding, and violent thunderstorms - without the preferred safety options available in urban areas.

The safety procedures discussed in this brochure are intended to reduce, but will not eliminate, your hazardous weather risk.

Prepare for your trip before heading out.

Know the nearest medical resources.

Have an evacuation plan.

Learn first aid and CPR.

Know your outing's county and nearby towns.

Storm warnings reference counties and towns.

Know the climatology of the area.

Plan how you'll get weather forecasts and warnings during your trip.

A portable NOAA Weather Radio may be your best bet.

Start checking the weather forecast several days in advance of your trip.

[Http://weather.gov](http://weather.gov) is a good, national Internet resource. Adjust your itinerary, equipment, and clothing as necessary.

Prepare for the worst weather you may encounter, and then recheck the forecast in detail the day your trip starts.

### **On the trail . . .**

- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio.

Adjust your route and timing for weather safety.

- Note patterns of daily cloud buildup or developing fronts so you can learn to anticipate local storms.

- Think weather safety as you hike and plan your camp.

Ridges, hilltops, open fields, ravines, canyons, streams, and dead trees present special hazards to the camper and hiker during severe weather.

### **How to Receive Weather Information**

If you will be in reception range, NOAA Weather Radio is the best way to receive forecasts and warnings from the National Weather Service.

Weather radios are available at many electronics stores and in outing stores and catalogs.

NOAA Weather Radios come in shirt-pocket size models such as the two shown here as well as desk top models. Make sure yours has the warning alarm feature.

### **What to Listen For**

• ***Weather Watch:***

A watch is issued when conditions become favorable for severe weather to develop.

Watch the sky and stay tuned for later forecasts and possible warnings. Prepare for severe weather!

• ***Weather Warning:***

A warning is issued when severe weather is occurring or is imminent. Immediate action is required!

***Lightning***

In the thunderstorm ball game,  
ONE STRIKE and you're out!

Lightning can carry a current of 30,000 amps or more.  
By comparison, normal 15 amp household current is enough to kill you!

Most lightning fatalities result from cardiac arrest.

Be prepared! Learn CPR!

**When a thunderstorm approaches . . .**

- Move to a sturdy building if available.
- Do not take shelter in small sheds, under solitary trees, or in convertible automobiles.
- Get out of boats and away from water.
- Get off high exposed terrain and away from any lone, tall object.

***If caught outdoors and no shelter is available . . .***

- Find a low spot away from fences, poles, and solitary trees.
- If in the woods, take shelter under the shorter trees.
- Avoid shallow caves and overhangs.

The ground current from lightning can jump the gap!

**If you cannot escape exposure to lightning . . .**

- If thunderstorms are near and you feel your skin tingle or your hair stand on end, you are at imminent risk of being struck by lightning.

***Assume the lightning position:***

squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet.

Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees.

Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground.

**DO NOT** lie down.

- Don't touch any metallic objects such as tent poles, wire fences, or metal canoe paddles.
- Lightning can strike outside heavy rain and may occur as far as 15 miles beyond the rainfall the bolt out of the blue.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. Take and maintain protective action until at least 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder.

**Tornadoes and Severe Thunderstorms**

Thunderstorms can produce violent downburst winds exceeding 100 mph and tornadoes with winds exceeding 200 mph.

Thunderstorm winds can topple trees and overturn tents and campers.



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Don't Get Lost



*Getting lost while camping and hiking is a growing problem. Although a compass might help the knowledgeable outdoors person find thier way from one place to the next, the average camper has no idea how to use a compass.*

To avoid getting lost, stay on well-marked trails and never camp without a friend, family member, or buddy along for the ride. Before you start on your adventure, obtain maps from the park or forest ranger.

If you and your buddy do get lost, follow trail markers to the nearest ranger station and wait for help to arrive. If you can't find a ranger's station, find a safe, sheltered place and wait for help to come looking for you.

An ordinary sports whistle is a camper's best friend when it comes to safe rescue.

The regular repeat of the clear tone can help guarantee your cries for help will be heard at distances the human voice can't travel.

Hitting the trails without at least one experienced adult to provide supervision and guidance is extremely unwise, according to the US National Park Service. So take along a parent, or even a trusted older friend or teacher.

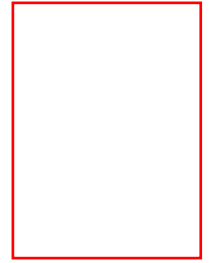
Sharing the beauty of the great outdoors can actually help teens and adults

get to know one another without all the ordinary urban distractions.

Finally, if you run into a problem, don't hesitate to ask for help.



"That's what the rangers are there for,"



**Keep a picture of your children with you in case they get lost.**

## The Hug-A-Tree Foundation

The Hug-A-Tree Foundation began as a result of the tragic death of a young boy during a family campout in San Diego County. The boy got lost on a popular trail and was found dead four days later. His parents and some searchers formed the Hug-A-Tree Foundation to help kids stay safe if they do get lost in the wilderness.

One of the biggest concerns of children when they get lost is that their parents or who ever is in charge will get mad at them and may not want to pay searchers to look for them. How many of you really think that your parents would want you to stay lost? While it may feel that way it is far from true. The answer is that your parents want you back no matter what. IN many countries there are rescue teams and volunteer search groups that look for lost people and they do it as a service to their communities.

Lots of people get lost in the wilderness - including adults! No one will be mad, and the rescuers are more than happy to help you. To them it is a fun challenge, something they want to do.

It is recommended that whenever you go on an outing to the wilderness you carry with you, in your pocket, a garbage bag and a whistle

If you get lost here is what you do:

Scenario #1: You are prepared

1. As soon as you realize you are lost - HUG A TREE! Stop sit by or even hug, a tree and relax.
2. Look around and see if you are near a clearing. If so, see if it is

possible to make a big arrow from sticks or dirt to point to where you are. This is so helicopters can see you.

3. If it is cool or rainy, pull out your TRASH BAG and use it for shelter. To do this you need to make a hole near the bottom of the bag for your face or else you will suffocate
4. If a helicopter is going over - lay down in the clearing, or wherever you are, and MAKE YOURSELF BIG
5. If you hear something near you, BLOW YOUR WHISTLE. An animal will run away and a searcher will know where you are
6. Remember to stop, stay warm and dry, and THINK you will be found
7. Your best weapon for surviving if you're lost is YOUR OWN BRAIN. This is something you will have with you no matter what. It is your best tool for getting out of a situation like this alive and well.

#### Scenario #2: You are not prepared

1. You still need to stop and HUG A TREE as soon as you know you are lost. STOP MOVING IMMEDIATELY.
2. Look around to see if you are near a clearing. If so, see if it is possible to make a big arrow from sticks or dirt to point to where you are. This is so helicopters can see you.
3. Whether you have a trash bag or not, you still need shelter. DO NOT throw away or discard any items of clothing like a jacket. Even if you don't need it now, you may need it later. If it is cold or rainy, try to stay as dry as possible and if you roll up into a ball you will stay warmer.
4. If a helicopter is going over - lay down in the clearing, or wherever you are, and MAKE YOURSELF BIG
5. If you hear something near you, yell. An animal will run away and a searcher might hear you.
6. If it is hot out, you want to stay cool, and if it is cold out, you want to stay warm.



7. Your best weapon for surviving if you're lost is YOUR OWN BRAIN. This is something you will have with you no matter what. It is your best tool for getting out of a situation like this alive and well.

What you DON'T need if you get lost:

Food - you will be found way before you get to the point where you are really starving

Water - if you follow the Hug-A-Tree guidelines, you will not be lost long enough to suffer from dehydration

Matches or a fire - You can keep warm by rolling up into a ball and staying out of the wind, or by using your garbage bag as a shelter

What about animals?

Different areas have different animals, but animals are not too excited about getting near humans. Yelling or blowing your whistle is usually enough to chase an animal away, if one even has the guts to come near you!

Do avoid snakes - never try to handle them or pick them up.

Above all, don't panic.

Understand that shortly after you realize you are lost, so will the groups you are with. They will tell the ranger, or call the sheriff or the police and all sorts of people will begin to look for you.

Spend time in the wilderness. There is nothing like it. But, be prepared and remember to Hug-A-Tree and survive, should you get lost!

**The following is only an outline of what you may wish to discuss with your child:**

Now that you are old enough to begin going on some bigger outdoor adventures, there are some things we need to discuss. No matter where we go, what we do or how careful we are, there is always the possibility that you or I could get lost or look around and not be able to locate each other. I want to talk about what you should do if that ever happens, so you will be able to help me find you faster and make yourself comfortable until I get there.

First of all, if you ever get separated from me or a group you are with, the most important thing to do is to stay in one place. I will bring some friends and start looking for you where I last knew you were, so don't leave that place. Find a rock, a log or a tree and make it your "house" or "fort" until I find you. Make sure that your "house" is somewhere out in the open where I

will be able to see you. You must know that I will not stop hunting for you until I find you, so just stay in one place and wait for me.

It is important to me that you know that I will not be angry or upset if you get lost - anyone can get lost - and, when I find you, I will be really happy and want to hear all about what you did while we were separated.

Dress your child in bright colors. Perhaps have them wear a brightly colored hat.

**Visibility is a key element.**

Teach your child to always look around them when they are hiking or taking part in activities in the outdoors. Have them note landmarks or unusual areas. Have them look backwards from time to time to note how the trail will look upon their return. Have them practice re-tracing their steps from time to time.

In the event your child does get separated, make sure they know it is all right to be worried and afraid, but that you will find them as soon as possible.



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Rivers, Streams and Flash Floods

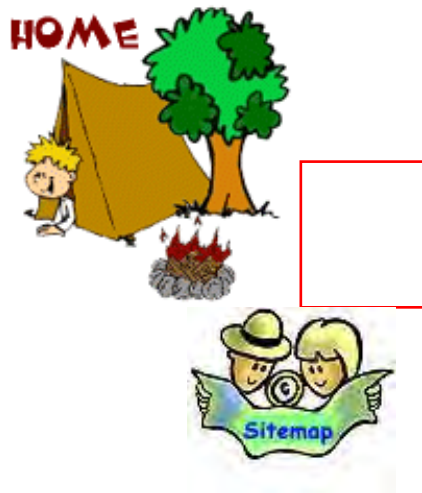
Flash floods can occur at any time of the year, but they are most common during the late summer thunderstorm season.

Especially during the summer months and monsoon season, thunderstorms can move into canyon country very quickly and drop large amounts of rain. This rain concentrates with little warning in narrow canyons and washes and causes flash flooding. When the water is forced into these narrow areas, a wall of water forms that pushes along with great force anything in its path including sand, dirt, rocks, boulders, shrubs, and trees. Water, along with the erosional agents it carries, has formed many tall, very narrow, and beautiful "slot" canyons that attract visitors from around the world. Slot canyons are a work in progress. Flash floods that created what you see today will alter these same canyons in the future.

When hiking, be observant. If you see rain, even 30 to 40 miles away, or if it is during or after a rain thunderstorm, avoid washes and canyon bottoms. If you believe that a flash flood may be approaching, immediately climb out of the canyon bottom and to high ground. Flash floods have been reported to sound like freight trains.

*In 1997, flash floods in Antelope Canyon and in the Grand Canyon's Phantom Creek area killed a total of 13 people.*

- Swimming in many western rivers is not recommended due to currents and hidden hazards.
- If you must swim, wear a life jacket.
- Never dive into a river.**  
Underwater hazards are hidden by the muddy water.
- During thunderstorms stay away from washes, low-lying areas, and be aware of flash floods.
- Never camp in the bottom of a wash or dry stream bed.
- Thunderstorms can change a dry stream bed into a rushing flood within minutes.
- Don't try to drive through a flood.**



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FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

Sun Smart



## Beat the heat

*Most people look forward to summer.  
It is a time to get outdoors and make the most of the warm sunny days.*

*Be nice to your body -  
drink lots of water and take frequent breaks.*

Follow these pointers to beat the heat:



Drink water.



Sport drinks

and fruit juices



are OK

but you have to drink more of them to get a comparable amount of water into your system.



Beer

causes dehydration,



and drinks with caffeine

remove fluid from your body.

**Take a break  
and drink water.**

Dizziness, fatigue, flushed skin, and a dry mouth are all symptoms of dehydration.

When you lose too much water your skin immediately flushes.

When you're dizzy, weak, or lethargic you've lost about 3% of your body

fluid.


At 5% you feel confused.

At 6% your heart races.

Once you've lost 7% of the water in your body, you'll pass out.

When it's really steamy, you should be consuming a pint of water every 30 minutes or so.

### Eat

Keep salty and revitalizing snacks such as nuts ,



dried fruit and energy bars

All handy to replenish what you lose as you sweat.

**Give your body a chance to cool down.**



A person with [heat stroke](#) will have a high body temperature and their body goes into shock.

Heat stroke causes delirium and possibly vomiting. At this point the body won't absorb water fast enough. Drinking could lead to more nausea and vomiting. Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition -

**seek immediate medical attention.**

**Keep babies out of direct sunlight.**

A baby outside should be covered with a light blanket and hat.

**Fill kids up with plenty of water**

before they go out in hot weather.

Children lose water at the same rate as adults. But since they have less body mass the effects are more severe, and they can become dehydrated very quickly.

**Sun sense!**



The sun is the main cause of skin cancer, and skin cancer is the most

common cancer.  
But the cure rate is 95%!

***YOU'RE AT GREATEST RISK IF . . .***

you work or play for long periods outdoors  
you are a blond or redhead who burns easily

Fair skinned people don't have enough color pigment in their skin to stop the sun's burning rays.

**Avoid being in the sun from 10-11 am to 2-3 pm when the UV (*ultraviolet*) rays are the strongest.**

**SUNSCREENS**

These are a preventative.

Once you are burned, drink plenty of liquids and cool the skin with water, gels or creams.

Those that contain Aloe are excellent and promote healing.  
Aspirin or Tylenol may ease the pain and allow you to sleep.

Look for a sunscreen with an SPF factor of 15 or high and one that will block both UV-A and UV-B rays. Apply sunscreen evenly to all exposed areas 20 minutes before you go out. Reapply every two hours, or after each swim.

*SPF (sunscreen protection factor) tells you how much longer you can stay in the sun, before burning, than you can without using a sunscreen. For example, SPF 15 (the minimum recommended) means that you can stay in the sun 15 times longer than you could without protection, before burning. SPF 15 will filter out UVB light (the most dangerous) and at least some UVA light (primarily causes premature aging and wrinkles, but with enough exposure can contribute to cancer).*

The higher the SPF number the greater the protection.  
But remember . . .

NO sun screen absorbs all the sun's rays.  
If you stay in the sun long enough you'll burn.

Sunlight reflected from water or snow can also be dangerous.

The most important factor is to apply sunscreen liberally and reapply often, especially after you swim or sweat. It also helps to stay out of the sun between 10 and 2 when the rays are the strongest and wear opaque, tightly woven clothing and a wide-brimmed hat. Children are particularly susceptible and one or more severe, blistering sunburns in childhood or adolescence can double the risk of melanoma (a type of skin cancer) later in life.

Titanium dioxide and zinc oxide deflect light rays, but should be combined with screening ingredients. There are colorful zinc oxide creams and transparent zinc oxide (Z-Cote) is now found in many moisturizers and foundations. Paba is an ingredient that some find a skin irritant. To improve water and sweat repellency of the formulas, some products use oils

that repel moisture and others are absorbed into the skin and then "time released".

Certain drugs, such as antihistamines, oral contraceptives, anti-inflammatory drugs, tranquilizers, oral anti-diabetics, diuretics, some antidepressants, and some dandruff shampoos can increase your sensitivity to light, raising the chance of an adverse reaction to the sun.

### **SUN- PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**

Another weapon in the war against the cancerous and aging effects of the sun is clothing made from special fabrics that block 95-99% of the UVA and UVB rays. As a comparison, the average tee shirt blocks 50% of harmful UVB rays when dry (10-20% when wet).

Available for adults and kids, there are pants, shirts and jackets on the market.

### **Take a Dive**

If you have the option of [jumping into a lake, river or the ocean](#) for a quick dip, do it.

It'll unclog your pores so you can continue to sweat effectively. Plus it feels sooooo good.

### **Wear a hat**

### **Avoid drugs**

Some medications, such as cold and allergy pills, can decrease sweat rates and contribute to overheating.

### **Seek out shade**

When you stop for breaks, rest in the shade.

***Protect yourself both summer and winter by following the above suggestions.***



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Theft at The Campsite

### Campground Theft

It is unfortunate that theft should be a concern when you are camping. However, this problem is on the rise. The following information may help you prevent property loss due to theft.

There are several types of theft to be concerned about. Most people worry about leaving their possessions in their tent while they are gone for the day.

Some robberies do take place this way - but not many.

Most robberies take place at night or at the trail heads while the visitors (*your family!*) are out hiking.

There are a few easy ways to reduce your chances of being robbed or lessen the impact a robbery could have on you.

Ask the camp staff if the park has had problems with robberies. Most of the parks warned people about problems when they had them.

### Preventing Day Time Camp Robberies

Techniques to lock your tent?

**Don't bother!**

There is no real point to locking your zippers. Anyone who would steal from your site could slice through your tent with a razor blade.

If you went to the effort to lock up your tent - it would draw attention to the fact that you have valuables inside.

You might not get robbed - but could still end up with a big hole in your tent when somebody went shopping.

You can leave most of your stuff in your tent, but leave nothing on [this list](#).

Sleeping bags, sleeping pads, lanterns. etc., should be just fine!

**Never leave food in your tent or campsite -**

Food in your tent will invite [critters](#) - and they may tear up your tent to get to it.

## Preventing Night Time Robberies

When you park in your site for the night, lock your doors!

Most people don't -  
and it's easy pickings.

Don't assume you'll hear a thief -  
people rarely do!

One couple had their dog in the car. The car got robbed and the dog never barked once! If your dog is not named 'Killer' or 'Spike' don't expect it to guard your belongings.

These people were just grateful that they still had a dog!

Try to put all of your valuables in your trunk.

An empty car is uninviting to a thief  
*(unless it's a car thief)*

If you pack your car to the roof like I do it is impossible to hide everything. Make sure that none of the items [listed here](#) are in your car - put them in the trunk or keep them with you!

If you drive an older car with wind wing windows -  
put all of your valuables in your trunk!

These windows can be opened from the outside with a coat hanger -  
and even I can open a pre-72 car door with a coat hanger!

If I can do it, anyone can! Your trunk is always the best bet!

## Preventing Parking Lot Theft

Parking at hiking areas during the day can also lead to theft.

**Never leave valuables in site in your car!**

You will get a broken window to go along with the loss of your valuables!

If you can leave enough gear at your site for all of your other stuff to go  
in your trunk, you will do best!

A car that is empty is less of a risk than one full of junk that may be hiding something!

### The most common things stolen are:

Cameras (video included)

Tapes

CD's

Radios (boom boxes and Walkman style)

Game Boy or other electronic game (leave it at home!)

Wallets

Nice clothing (jackets, Levi's jeans, etc.)

Coolers

## Catching the Robber

Some people do catch these thieves in the act.

If you find someone stealing your stuff, use common sense!

Like most wild animals, most campground thieves will run if you shout loudly.

These people want nothing to do with you -

they just want your stuff.  
You just may be unlucky enough to get a really dangerous criminal -  
so please don't try to chase this person down!

If you are robbed report any missing items to a Ranger.  
There are many people who actually make a living by robbing campgrounds  
and selling the stolen goods.  
Any information you provide to a Ranger could help to catch the criminal.

**Use common sense and have a great trip!**



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING Swimming



## General Water Safety Tips

**Learn to swim.**

The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim.

Always swim with a buddy;  
**never swim alone.**

The American Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability.

To enroll in a swim course, contact your local Red Cross chapter. Most of your local public swimming pools offer swimming lessons, Some for free!

**Swim in supervised areas only.**



📌 **Obey all rules and posted signs.**

📌 **Watch out for the  
"dangerous too's"**

too tired,

too cold,

too far from safety,

too much sun,

too much strenuous activity.

📌 **Don't mix alcohol and swimming.**

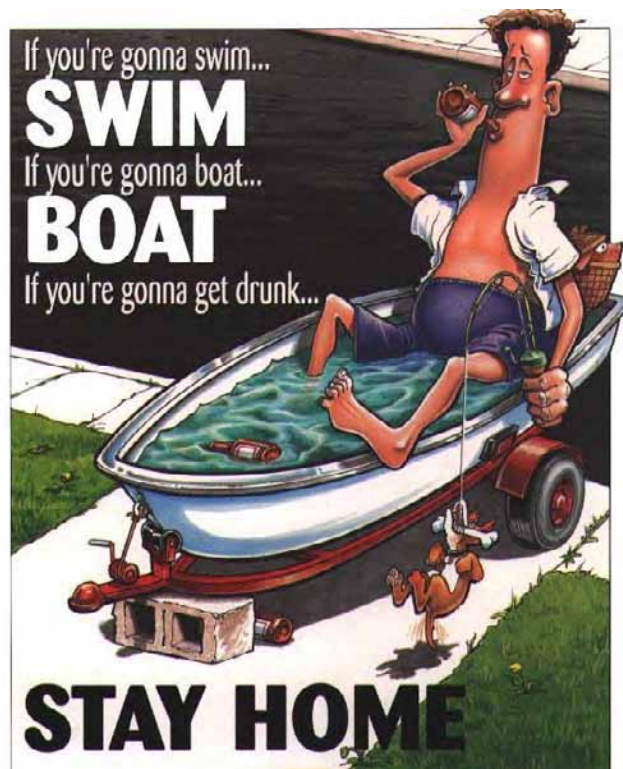
Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills, and reduces your body's ability to stay warm.

Alcohol and water can be a deadly combination.

A cold beer may seem like the perfect refreshment for a day at the lake or beach, but you may want to think twice before opening that drink.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about half of all the drownings in the United States involve the combination of alcohol and water recreation.

Many drownings could be prevented if people just avoided drinking when they're around water or driving a boat.



Boating under the influence of alcohol is generally prosecuted much like driving under the influence.

It's also important to set a good example for your children.

If you decide to disregard this safety precaution and you choose to drink anyway . . .

Don't let your kids see you drinking before or during swimming or boating. **Above all, don't drink when you're supposed to be supervising children around water.**

If your reflexes are diminished by the effects of alcohol, you may not be able to react in time to prevent an accident or come to the rescue if something happens.

📌 **Pay attention to local [weather conditions](#) and [forecasts](#).**

Stop swimming at the first indication of bad weather.



**GET OUT IMMEDIATELY**  
at the first sign of lightning!!!

📌 **Know how deep the water is.**

Make sure the water is deep enough before entering headfirst. Too many swimmers are seriously injured every year by entering headfirst into water that is too shallow.

A feetfirst entry is much safer than diving.

**Don't dive or jump into water that is not at least 12 feet deep.**

📌 **Don't run around a pool, push people in or dunk other swimmers.**

📌 **Don't chew gum or eat food while swimming, diving or playing in the**

**water.**

 [Know how to prevent, recognize, and respond to emergencies.](#)



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Camping Humor



#### AT CAMP

Dear Mom,

Our scoutmaster told us all to write to our parents in case you saw the flood on TV and worried. We are OK. Only 1 of our tents and 2 sleeping bags got washed away. Luckily, none of us got drowned because we were all up on the mountain looking for Chad when it happened. Oh yes, please call Chad's mother and tell her he is OK. He can't write because of the cast. I got to ride in one of the search & rescue jeeps. It was neat. We never would have found him in the dark if it hadn't been for the lightning.

Scoutmaster Webb got mad at Chad for going on a hike alone without telling anyone. Chad said he did tell him, but it was during the fire so he probably didn't hear him.

Did you know that if you put gas on a fire, the gas can will blow up? The wet wood still didn't burn, but one of our tents did. Also some of our clothes. John is going to look weird until his hair grows back.

We will be home on Saturday if Scoutmaster Webb gets the car fixed. It wasn't his fault about the wreck. The brakes worked OK when we left. Scoutmaster Webb said that a car that old you have to expect something to break down; that's probably why he can't get insurance on it. We think it's a neat car. He doesn't care if we get it dirty, and if it's hot, sometimes he lets us ride on the tailgate. It gets pretty hot with 10 people in a car. He let us take turns riding in the trailer until the highway patrolman stopped and talked to us. Scoutmaster Webb is a neat guy. Don't worry, he is a good driver.

In fact, he is teaching Terry how to drive. But he only lets him drive on the mountain roads where there isn't any traffic. All we ever see up there are logging trucks.

This morning all of the guys were diving off the rocks and swimming out in the lake. Scoutmaster Webb wouldn't let me because I can't swim and Chad was afraid he would sink because of his cast, so he let us take the canoe across the lake. It was great. You can still see some of the trees under the water from



the flood. Scoutmaster Webb isn't crabby like some scoutmasters. He didn't even get mad about the life jackets.

He has to spend a lot of time working on the car so we are trying not to cause him any trouble. Guess what? We have all passed our first aid merit badges. When Dave dove in the lake and cut his arm, we got to see how a tourniquet works. Also Wade and I threw up. Scoutmaster Webb said it probably was just food poisoning from the leftover chicken, he said they got sick that way with the food they ate in prison. I'm so glad he got out and become our scoutmaster. He said he sure figured out how to get things done better while he was doing his time.

I have to go now. We are going into town to mail our letters and buy bullets. Don't worry about anything. We are fine.

Love, Cole

--Author Unknown



### A Simple Answer

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. After a good meal, they lay down for the night and went to sleep. Some hours later, Holmes awoke and nudged his faithful friend.



**Holmes** said: "Watson, look up and tell me what you see".

**Watson** said: "I see a fantastic panorama of countless stars".

**Holmes**: "And what does that tell you?"

**Watson** pondered for a moment: "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo. Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, I can see that God is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow."

"Why? - What does it tell you, Holmes?"

**Holmes** was silent for a moment then spoke: "Someone has stolen our tent."



This blonde goes into a restaurant and notices there's a "peel and win" sticker on her coffee cup. So, she peels it off and starts screaming, "I've won a motor home! I've won a motor home!"

The waitress says, "That's impossible. The biggest prize is a mini-van."

But the blonde keeps screaming, "I've won a motor home! I've won a motor home!"

Finally, the manager comes over and says, "Ma'am, I'm sorry, but you're mistaken. You couldn't possibly have won a motor home, because we didn't have that as a prize!"

The blonde says, "No, it's not a mistake. I've won a motor home!" So, she hands the ticket to the manager and he reads -  
"WIN A BAGEL."



Once there was a group of hikers climbing Mt. Everest. The group leader gave the rest of the group some very important advice. "If by chance you see the Yeti, run, but whatever you do, Don't Touch The Yeti!!"

That night, after the group had set up camp, one member was in his tent, when the great Yeti came. The Yeti was standing in the doorway. The guy was so scared, he shot out running, but on his way, he touched the Yeti.

The Yeti started running after him.

The guy was running as fast as he could.

He got off the mountain, but the Yeti was still following.

He rented a bike and cycled all the way to the nearest city.

Later, the man saw the Yeti coming.

The guy caught a train and headed out of the city as fast as he could.

A couple days later, he saw the Yeti coming.

The guy at once, got on a plane to America.

A few weeks later, he sees the Yeti coming his way.

The guy starts running as fast as he could, but he was too exhausted. He trips and falls.

The Yeti comes up to the man.

The guy gets up to his feet and says, "**What do you want?!**"

The Yeti reaches out to him and says,

"Tag, you're it."



### Life Lessons

Any stone in a hiking boot migrates to the point of maximum pressure.

The distance to a given camp site remains constant as twilight approaches.

The number of mosquitoes at any given location is inversely proportional to the amount of repellent that remains.

The probability of diarrhea increases with the square of the thistle content of the local vegetation.

The area of level ground in the neighborhood tends to vanish as the need to make camp becomes finite.

In a mummy bag the urgency of ones need to urinate is inversely proportional to the amount of clothing worn. It is also inversely proportional to the temperature and the degree to which the mummy bag is completely zipped up.

Waterproof clothing isn't. (However, it is 100% effective at containing sweat).

The width of backpack straps decreases with the distance hiked. To compensate, the weight of the backpack increases.

Average temperature increases with the amount of clothing brought.

Tent stakes come only in the quantity "N-1" where N is the number of stakes necessary to stake down a tent.

Propane/butane tanks that are full when they are packed, will unexplainably empty themselves before you can reach the campsite.

Given a chance, matches will find a way to get wet.

Your side of the tent is the side that leaks.

All foods assume a uniform taste, texture, and color when freeze-dried.

Divide the number of servings by two when reading the directions for reconstituting anything freeze-dried.

When reading the instructions of a pump-activated water filter, "hour" should be substituted for "minute" when reading the average quarts filtered per minute.

The weight in a backpack can never remain uniformly distributed.

All tree branches in a forest grow outward from their respective trunks at exactly the height of your nose. If you are male, tree branches will also grow at groin height.

You will lose the little toothpick in your Swiss Army knife as soon as you open the box.

Rain.

Enough dirt will get tracked into the tent on the first day out, that you can grow the food you need for the rest of the trip in rows between sleeping bags.

When camping in late fall or winter, your underwear will stay at approximately 35.702 degrees Kelvin no matter how long you keep it in your sleeping bag with you.

Bears.

The sun sets three-and-a-half times faster than normal when you're trying to set up camp.

Tents never come apart as easily when you're leaving a site as when you're trying to get them set up in the first place.

When planning to take time off of work/school for your camping trip, always add an extra week, because when you get home from your "vacation" you'll be too tired to go back for a week after.

Rain



## Alert!

**In case anyone is considering doing some camping this spring or summer, please note the following public service announcement: In Alaska, tourists are warned to wear tiny bells on their clothing when hiking in bear country. The bells warn away MOST bears. Tourists are also cautioned to watch the ground on the trail, paying particular attention to bear droppings to be alert for the presence of Grizzly Bears. One can tell a Grizzly dropping because it has tiny bells in it.**





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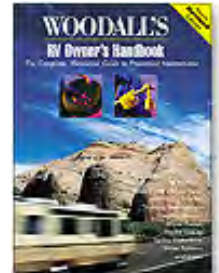
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[Click Here!](#)**FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING****Prepare Your Vehicle Before You Head Out!**

## How To Prepare Your Car For Vacation

Every summer millions of Americans take to the highways and Interstates in search of fun, sun, and adventure. They want to take a much needed vacation from their everyday concerns and problems.

Tow truck operators in resort areas or along Interstate highways see all too many travelers forced to return home ahead of schedule. Car trouble, usually due to neglected preventive maintenance, brings an abrupt end to vacation plans.

The situation usually means more than just a repair bill, says the Car Care Council. It can involve towing charges, lodging and possibly a rental car. Add to that the cost of extra phone calls, meals and general inconvenience, and the ordeal becomes expensive. This scenario usually can be avoided with a pre-vacation inspection performed by the vehicle owner or a qualified automotive technician.

The most important thing in taking an automotive vacation is to make sure your vehicle is in top shape. A monster in the form of car troubles can destroy even the nicest vacations. So before packing suitcases, filling the cooler with drinks and snacks and whipping out your trusty road atlas, take some time to make sure that your vehicle is ready to take you to paradise. All it takes is a few minutes of preventative maintenance in your driveway and you can help eliminate hours of costly on-the-road problems.

The following items include things that most people can do for themselves very easily just by reading the vehicle's owner's manual. If you don't have the time or lack the confidence to do these things yourself, take it to your local dealership or trusted repair shop and have them give the car a good going over.

If your vehicle is due for an oil change or other regular maintenance in the time you are away, get it done before you leave. However you choose to prep your vehicle, do it at least a week or so before the trip, so that if the car needs any servicing it can be done before your vacation.

## Things To Check

### **Fuses:**

The fuse access panel is located on the left side or drivers side under the steering wheel on most vehicles. Check to see if all the fuses are there and good. Always carry extras, at least one of every size..

**CAUTION!** When replacing a blown fuse, it is important to use only a fuse having the correct amperage rating. The use of a fuse with a rating other than indicated may result in a dangerous electrical system overload. If a properly rated fuse continues to blow, it indicates a problem in the circuit. This must be corrected or the problem will not go away.

### **Windshield Wiper Blades:**

The rubber edges of the wiper blades and the windshield should be cleaned periodically with a sponge or soft cloth and a mild non-abrasive cleaner. This will remove accumulations of salt or road film.

Inspect them often for wear, cracks, tears, dirt and road grime.

Operation of the wipers on dry glass for long periods may cause deterioration of the wiper blades and can scratch the glass.

Always use washer fluid when using the wipers to remove salt or dirt from a dry windshield.

### **Vital fluids:**

Check all of your vehicle's fluid levels.

This includes engine oil, coolant, transmission fluid, brake fluid, power steering fluid, and windshield washer fluid.

Most new cars have transparent reservoir tanks and in many cases, you don't even have to get your hands dirty. Refer to the owners' manual for the proper procedures for checking and adding fluids to your vehicle. In particular, when checking the brake fluid level, also look at the fluid color. It should be clear or light amber. If it's dark and cloudy, the brake fluid is contaminated and should be replaced and the brake system flushed.

You can also do a quick "leak test" in your driveway.

Let your engine run for about 15 minutes so it reaches full operating temperature. Then park it over a large piece of cardboard a while and see if any fluids have dripped from underneath it.

Very often you can tell what fluid it is by feel and color.

A reddish liquid is either power steering fluid or transmission fluid.

Engine oil is usually black or brown.

Pink or yellow green liquid is anti-freeze.

Clear liquids are either water, condensation from the air conditioner, which is no problem,

or

clutch or brake fluid.

If you are in unfamiliar territory, don't wait until the fuel gauge reads empty or the low fuel light comes on. Start looking for a refill at half a tank. Better to make one too many pit stops than one too few.



## **Engine Oil Requirements:**

Checking Oil Level to assure proper engine lubrication, the engine oil must be maintained at the correct level. Check the oil level at regular intervals, such as every fuel stop.

The best time to check the oil level is about 5 minutes after a fully warmed-up engine is shut off, or before starting the vehicle after it has sat overnight.

*Checking the oil while the vehicle is on level ground will improve the accuracy of the oil level readings.*

Add oil only when the level on the dipstick is at or below the MIN or add mark on the dipstick.

## **Oil Filter:**

The oil filter should be replaced with a new filter at every oil change.

**CAUTION!** Do not overfill the crankcase. This will cause oil aeration and loss of oil pressure.

## **Power steering pumps:**

Fluid level should be maintained at the proper level indicated on the dipstick. If necessary, add fluid to restore to the proper level. With a clean cloth, wipe any spilled fluid from all surfaces. Only petroleum fluids specially formulated for minimum effect on the rubber hoses should be used.

## **Belts and Hoses:**

Check all the drive belts and hoses for any signs of wear and deterioration. Belts that are frayed, glazed, cracked, cut or have chunks missing should be replaced immediately. With the engine off and cold, look at each hose and see if there are leaks, bulges, cracks, or swelling. If they look good, give them a squeeze test. Good hoses are firm but flexible. Any hoses that feel spongy, soft, or brittle should be replaced.

## **Tires:**

Your tires should be inspected periodically for unusual wear. Look close for cuts, punctures, embedded screws, nails and other objects big or small.

Tire pressure should be checked and maintained at specified pressures. Correct air pressure will help to increase the life of your tires. You cannot accurately estimate tire pressure by just looking at it. Always use a good quality tire pressure gauge. The gauges attached to the air hoses at your local gas stations are rarely accurate.

If there is a plug in any of your tires from a previous puncture. Using soapy water, spray the area where the plug is. If bubble start to appear, you may need to seek help from a tire shop to have it repaired again or replaced.

**It is equally important to keep your spare tire up to par.**

You do not need to find out that it is low in air pressure when you need it most.

### **Front wheel- drive:**

Drive Shaft Universal Joints: Your vehicle has four constant velocity universal joints. Periodic lubrication of these joints is not required. However, the joint boots should be inspected for external leakage or damage when other maintenance is performed. If leakage or damage is evident, the universal joint boot and grease should be replaced immediately.

Continued operation could result in failure of the universal joint due to water and dirt contamination of the grease. This would require complete replacement of the joint assembly.

### **Battery:**

One of the leading causes of roadside problems is the battery. Check that the battery electrolyte is up to the proper level by removing the battery caps and looking inside. The proper level is about " to >" above the battery plates. The most common battery type today are maintenance free batteries. Maintenance free batteries have sealed caps and require no checking. But some batteries say maintenance free but do have removable caps. These should be checked in the usual manner. Finally, check the battery to see that there are no cracks or holes in the battery casing itself. If the battery is four or five years old, consider replacing it.

Also, make sure that the battery terminals and cables are clean and securely attached to the battery terminals. If the terminals and cables are covered with "snow", remove the cables from the battery and thoroughly clean the cables and terminals. You can use a mixture of baking soda and water, which will neutralize the battery acid. You can clean the cables and terminals with a battery cleaning brush or some medium emory cloth. Check the terminals and if they are eaten away, replace them. When they are nice and clean, reattach the cables and make sure they are tight. You can coat the terminals with white lithium grease or Vaseline® to protect them from corroding again.

### **Spark Plugs and Spark Plug wires:**

Spark plugs must fire properly to assure engine performance and emission control. New plugs should be installed at the specified mileage. The entire set should be replaced if there is any malfunction due to a faulty spark plug. Check the specification section of your manual for the proper type of spark plugs for vehicle. Spark Plug wires should also be inspected for evidence of cuts, cracks, splits and corrosion. Replace as needed or according to the specification and procedures described in the Service Manual.

### **Brakes:**

If you hear any grinding noises or feel unusual vibrations when you apply the brakes, or if the vehicle pulls to one side, take the vehicle in for a comprehensive checkup. It would be a good idea just to have your brakes looked at to be sure they won't need replacing 1,000 miles into your trip.

### **Engine Air Filter:**

Under normal driving conditions, replacement of the engine air filter is recommended at the intervals shown on the maintenance chart. If however, the vehicle is driven frequently under dusty or severe conditions, the filter element should be inspected periodically (at least every 15,000 miles) and replaced if necessary.

### **Fuel Filter:**

A plugged fuel filter can limit the speed at which a vehicle can be driven and can cause hard starting. Should an excessive amount of dirt accumulate in the fuel tank, frequent filter replacement may be necessary.

### **Cooling system:**

**WARNING!** *When working near the electric radiator-cooling fan, disconnect the fan motor lead or turn the ignition key to the OFF position. The fan is temperature control led and can start at any time when the ignition key is in the ON position.*

Sustained high speed driving and hot summer days combine to put a lot of stress on an engine's cooling system. If your vehicles is using conventional green anti-freeze and hasn't been flushed for two years, now is an excellent time to do it. If it has extended life anti-freeze go with the manufacturers recommended change intervals. If this interval occurs during the trip, do it now. The cooling system should be refilled with a 50/50 mix of new antifreeze and water. Don't refill with just straight anti-freeze. If the system needs to be flushed, it is a fairly easy job for a DIY. Just make sure you put the old antifreeze in a container and take it to a proper recycling location.

### **Inspection**

Coolant protection checks should be made every 12 months (prior to the onset of freezing weather, where applicable). If coolant is dirty or rusty in appearance, the system should be drained, flushed and refilled with fresh coolant. Check face of radiator for any accumulation of bugs, leaves, etc. If dirty, clean the radiator core by gently spraying water from a garden hose at the back of the core.

Check the reserve tank tubing for condition and tightness of connection at reserve tank and radiator.

[Inspect the entire system for leaks.](#)

### **Adding Coolant:**

When adding coolant or refilling system, a minimum of 50% solution of ethylene glycol antifreeze coolant in water should be used. Higher concentrations (not to exceed 70%) are required if temperatures below -35°F are anticipated.

**WARNING!** Never add coolant to the radiator when the engine is overheated. Do not loosen or remove radiator cap to cool overheated engine! The coolant is Under pressure and severe scalding could result.

### **Radiator Cap:**

The radiator cap must be fully tightened to prevent loss of coolant, and to

insure that coolant will return to the radiator from the coolant reserve tank.

The radiator cap should be inspected and cleaned if there is any accumulation of foreign material on the sealing surfaces.

The warning words "**DO NOT OPEN HOT**" on the radiator pressure cap are a safety precaution.

Heat causes pressure to build up in the cooling system.

To prevent scalding or injury,

**do not remove the pressure cap while the system is hot or under pressure.**

#### **Coolant Level:**

The coolant reserve system provides a quick visual method for determining that the coolant level is adequate. With the engine idling and warmed to normal operating temperature, the level of the coolant in the overflow bottle should be between the "MAX" and "MIN" marks. The radiator normally remains completely full, so there is no need to remove the radiator cap except for checking coolant freeze point or replacement with new antifreeze coolant. Your service attendant should be advised of this. So long as the engine operating temperature is satisfactory, the overflow bottle need only be checked once a month.

When additional coolant is needed to maintain the proper level, it should be added to the overflow bottle. Do not overfill.

#### **Points to Remember:**

- When the vehicle is stopped after a few miles of operation. You may observe vapor coming from the front of the engine compartment. This is normally a result of moisture from rain, snow, or high humidity accumulating on the radiator and being vaporized when the thermostat opens, allowing hot water to enter the radiator.
- If an examination of your engine compartment shows no evidence of radiator or hose leaks, the vehicle may be safely driven. The vapors will soon dissipate.
- A Do not overfill the reserve tank (bottle).
- If frequent coolant additions are required, or if the level in the reserve tank does not drop when the engine cools, the cooling system should be pressure tested for leaks.
- Maintain coolant concentration of 50% ethylene glycol (minimum) with recommended antifreeze for proper corrosion protection of your engine, which contains aluminum components.
- Make sure that the radiator and reserve tank overflow hoses are not kinked or obstructed.
- Keep the front of the radiator clean. If your vehicle is equipped with air conditioning, keep the front of the condenser clean also.

- Increasing engine speed at idle does not reduce coolant temperature! Put transaxle in NEUTRAL and let engine idle at normal engine idle speed.

### **Air- conditioning:**

Make sure your car's heating and A/C is working properly. Run it for a while in each of its operating modes and check that the airflow is coming from all appropriate vents. If the A/C system takes an inordinately long time to cool the inside of the car, or if the air never gets cold enough, the system probably needs to be checked for leaks and recharged. If the A/C smells like your sons gym socks, the drain hose is probably clogged or restricted.

**While following this list of checks and inspections are a good idea, you should be aware of other, more general warning signs as well.**

Ticking, clunking or knocking noises, a sudden vibration or shimmy, or anything out of the ordinary is probably a symptom of a hidden problem that should be checked before hitting the road.

Keep in mind that no matter how careful and thorough you were in doing your pre-trip preparations, unexpected problems can still happen.

So it is a good idea to have some basic emergency gear onboard if something does happen.

- Jumper cables

- flares,

- cell phone

- a gallon of anti-freeze

- a gallon of water

- three quarts of oil

- a couple of quarts of ATF

and a couple of gallons of bug juice can be worth ten times their weight in gold when you need it 50 miles from nowhere.

Another good idea is to make a check list of things to check when you make a pit stop so you can be sure to cover all your bases.

Do these simple checks and what happened to the Griswalds will not happen to you.

And finally, not only can a pre-trip inspection help reduce chances of costly and possibly dangerous road trouble, it also provides an opportunity to have needed repairs made at home, with your own technician who knows your vehicle.

Especially important, it provides peace of mind.

While no inspection can guarantee a car's performance, it's comforting to know proper precautions were taken.



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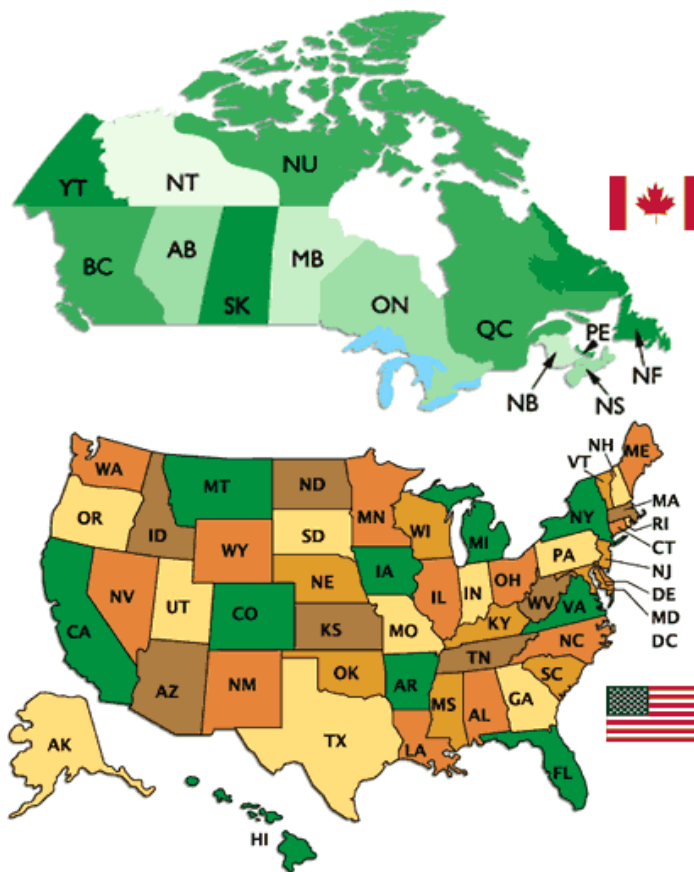
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FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

## Illumination



Have you ever been stuck in the woods with a flashlight full of dead batteries?

It's the kind of mistake you only make once.

Spare batteries should always be on your packing list, and it's smart to bring some sort of backup light source, too, such as a candle.

There are a number of backcountry lighting options available today, each with pros and cons.

Here are some tips to decide which is best for you.

### Headlamp:

NO, No, No, No, NO!  
NOT your car headlamps!!!!

We're talking about a lamp that straps over your head!



I like my hands free to stir the soup, turn the page or pitch the tent, this is my favorite option.

Just pull the straps over your head and make like a lighthouse - the beam follows your every gaze.

Many headlamps have adjustable beams so you can either pinpoint the light or open it up for a wider range of coverage. Most headlamps run on AA batteries. You'll find ultralight options that use two, or, for heavier and brighter beams, four batteries.

No matter which type you choose, look for a secure on/off switch, so the light doesn't accidentally switch on inside your pack.

### Flashlight:

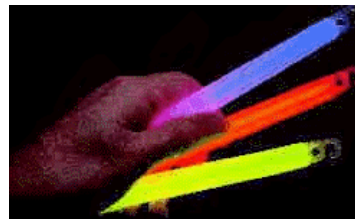


Here's an economical option for folks who don't mind sacrificing a hand to hold their light.

Flashlights come in all shapes and sizes, from marker-size lights to jumbo night watchman-style beams. Most backpackers find the minilights sufficient and much easier to pack.

Many flashlight users clamp their light between their teeth to get the hands-free headlamp effect. If the thought of cold metal in your mouth gives you goose bumps, try wrapping the end of your light in duct tape. Also, you can buy straps that let you lash the light to your head for the headlamp effect, or you can rig one up with a headband and some clever stitching.

## Glow- Sticks



You may find glow-sticks a useful source of gentle lighting. They can be hung inside your tent or could be used as a night light for your child - and of course, they don't use up batteries!

## Lantern:



For illuminating a large area such as a campsite or kitchen area, nothing beats a gas lantern, which gives off a warm, wide pool of light.

Lanterns come in a variety of sizes and run on gas cartridges that let you stand them upright or hang them overhead.

Gas lanterns work best in warmer temperatures, and they require a bit of extra care. For instance, you have to keep the mantle intact and take care to pack the lantern so as not to break the glass globe, but many mini-lanterns come with padded cases that do the trick.

*(Note: If you use a gas-canister stove, be sure to get a gas lantern that operates on the same type of canister so you don't have to pack two types.)*

- Coleman rechargeable battery twin florescent  
*great for in the tent*
- Coleman propane electronic ignition *(no matches needed)*
- Coleman propane dual mantle *(needs matches)*
  - Coleman fuel (dual mantle)  
*Don't forget the funnel to fill this one!*

Depending on your lantern don't forget the . . .

- recharger
- Propane fuel
- a bulk propane tank.

*The initial investment in the tank itself and first fill was about \$28. To refill our 20 lb. tank costs \$8.00. A bulk tank also requires a pipe and hose. One 1# cylinder of propane costs about \$2 (\$1.87) in our area. Doing your math, it would cost \$40 to fill the 20 lb. tank at the roughly \$2.00/lb. price. A significant savings! For weekend camping our personal opinion is the bulk tank is a hassle, but for anything longer than a weekend it would be worth it!*

- Coleman fuel



and funnel

- mantles

*there are even "clip on" style mantles out now*

### Repairing gas mantles

Fitting a gas mantle is often a fiddly job and one that requires care to get a satisfactory and safe result.

#### Gas mantles, cloth type.

Some makes of mantles have a large and a small hole. They are normally color coded. Check the instructions for specific details. Some are identical size holes. They are made of a silk like material and can be handled quite readily.

#### When should you replace a mantle?

When a hole appears in the side, this produces a flame and if left will become larger and can break the glass. It is also inefficient and reduces the brightness of the lamp.

Remove the glass carefully (make sure it is cool) and remove any parts of the old mantle. This may be a good time to clean the jet. Place the mantle over the top of the stem and firmly pull down easing the lower hole until it sits in the lower rim. Be careful not to puncture the mantle on the stem or to pull the hole too hard so as to rip it. Now pull the upper hole over the top rim. Fluff out the mantle so it is ball shaped.

No matter how many times you do this, some time it will go wrong. Keep plenty of spare mantles with you. If you have never done one before, practice before going to camp.

Now is the time to light the mantle.

Use a match, it is a soft flame. Hold under the mantle all around and the mantle will smolder. Allow it to smolder all the way to the top. You can now turn the gas on, but be gentle; too much will blow the mantle to pieces, it can become quite fragile.

Ignite the gas and the mantle will glow and shrink into a regular shape. Once it has you can turn the gas up, having replaced the glass, and the job is complete. Do not touch the mantle at any time as it will disintegrate to dust.

#### Gas mantles which are complete on a porcelain base.

These are simpler to fit but great care is needed. Remove the glass and old mantle. Remove from the box having read which end to open first. The box will normally open completely to a flat sheet with a slot holding the hard ring. The mantle part is fragile, do not touch. Taking hold of the ring fit it by inserting into a slot and twisting into position. The lantern is now ready for use.

#### General notes

Do not use lanterns with damaged glasses, they can easily shatter and cause serious injury.

For information on safety with gas, [click here](#).

- Matches

*We use the Clicker Fire Starters you can buy anywhere for a buck.*

- Lantern Case

*This is a MUST to avoid breaking glass*

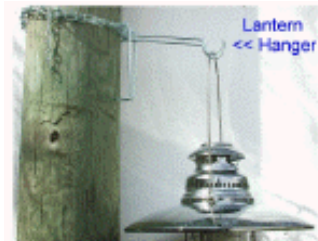


- Dependable flashlight(s)

- A 4 cell Mag light. Worth every penny of the \$20.

- The Black & Decker Snake Light to be absolutely indispensable! You can find them on sale; I'm even starting to find 'generic' snake lights on sale. Snake lights hang around your neck, freeing both hands for whatever task your doing. They also can be coiled so they stand up like a desk lamp, for reading etc.

- Lantern tree hanger



[Click photo](#)

[for enlarged image](#)

*A long chain (with a big stable hook) that wraps around a tree. Here you can hang your lantern out of reach from your little ones. No worry about a child tipping the lantern over or burning themselves. This added height also increases the light your lantern will give off.*

*This also saves the trees.*

*Sadly, many campers still pound nails into trees to hang their lanterns.*

*This causes damage to the tree, and the tree will die.*

*I've also seen Shepard's hooks used to hang lanterns.*

## Candle lantern:

There's no simpler way to light up your life than a little candle lantern.

They provide warmth, a romantic ambience, and you can rest easy knowing that you're not contributing to landfill problems with batteries and empty gas cartridges.

You can find candle lanterns in tiny votive sizes, all the way up to a three-candle unit, which is great for car camping or paddling trips.

If you opt for a candle lantern, spend the extra few bucks on a padded case to protect the glass globe while it's inside your pack.



**The original candle lantern.**

A safe and dependable light source for hiking, camping and your home emergency kit. This value pack contains a candle lantern and 3 extra candles packed together in a handy, protective fleece pouch.

- Each candle burns approximately 9 hours.

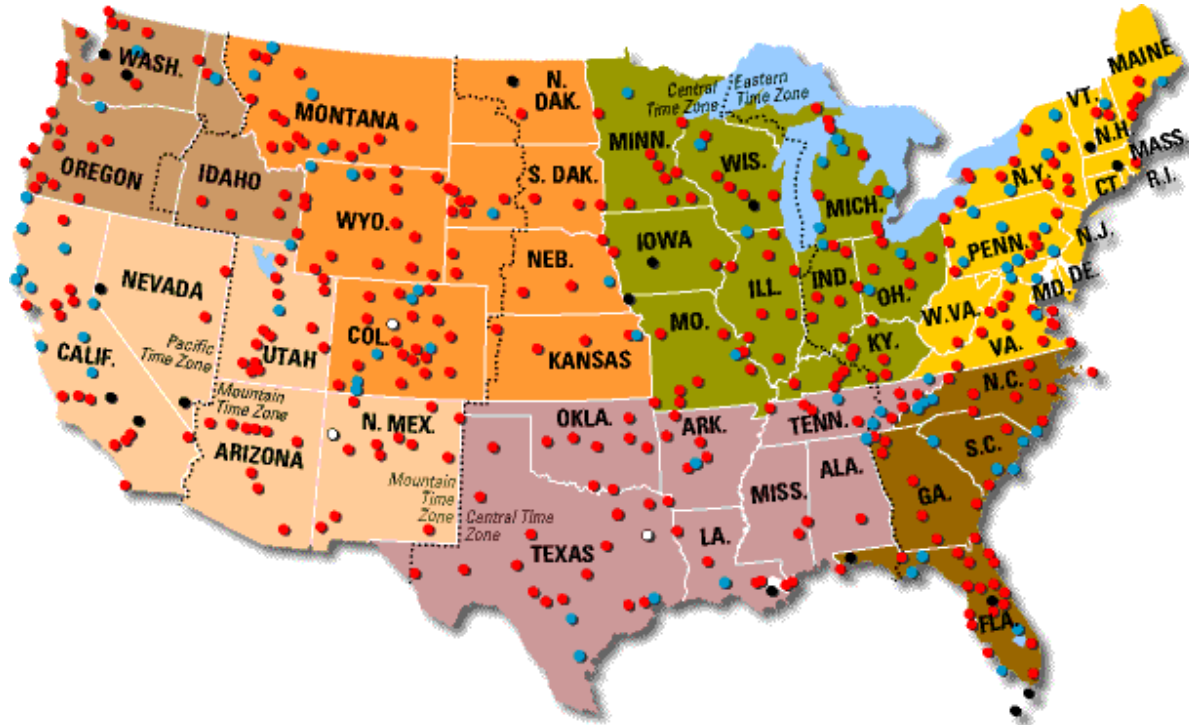
- Unique spring-loaded candle assembly and dripless candle burns at constant flame height.



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# KOA Locations - United States




[KOA Map Legend](#)

To find a campground or RV park, click a KOA location in the U.S. on the image above or for a textual listing [click here](#).

**Concerned about rising gas prices?**

[Use our calculator to estimate the impact of higher gas costs on your travel plans.](#)



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING



## Learn to tie Knots

- [\[Bowline\]](#) [\[Clove hitch\]](#) [\[Double Sheetbend\]](#) [\[Figure Eight Knot\]](#) [\[Fisherman's Knot\]](#) [\[Lark's Head\]](#)
- [\[Left Handed Sheet bend\]](#) [\[Sheep Shank\]](#) [\[Sheet bend\]](#) [\[Reef Knot\]](#) [\[Rolling Hitch\]](#) [\[Round turn and two half hitches\]](#)
- [\[Tautline Hitch\]](#) [\[Thumb Knot\]](#) [\[Timber Hitch\]](#)

[\[Glossary of Terms for knots\]](#)



### The Bowline

The Bowline Knot is one of the most used loop knots. This variant is most used in the world. Probably due to its simplicity, security, and its relationship with the Sheet bend.

Keep the cross point in step A between a finger and thumb and make a clock-wise turn with your wrist. Without the loop in between, it is the same knot.

If the loop is expected to be heavily loaded, the bowline is, in fact, not secure enough. There is a rule of thumb which states that the loose end should be as long as 12 times the circumference for the sake of safety.

**The Bowline**  
*"Lay the bight to make a hole  
 Then under the back and around the pole  
 Over the top and thru the eye  
 Cinch it tight and let it lie"*

In the same way that a [Left Handed Sheet bend](#) is a [Sheet bend](#) that has the running end of the rope coming out of the wrong side of the knot, a cowboy bowline is a bowline that also has the running end of the rope coming out of the wrong side of the knot. It suffers the same problems as the left handed sheet bend.

**Don't be afraid to use this knot to form a loop of any size in rope.**

[Camping Terminology](#)

[Terms](#)

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For added security, finish the knot with a [figure eight knot](#) to remove any possibility of the Bowline slipping.

You can use this knot to put your hammock up.

Use it whenever a stable knot is needed to support your weight.

You should make sure that your bowline, when tied around a tree, is finished with a slip knot. Otherwise you will find great difficulty getting your hammock off the tree in the morning.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

To tie:

1. Make the overhand loop with the end held toward you, then pass end through loop.
2. Now pass end up behind the standing part, then down through the loop again.
3. Draw up tight.



## Clove Hitch

You can use this knot to attach a rope to a pole, this knot provides a quick and secure result.

It rarely jams, and can in fact suffer from the hitch unrolling under tension if the pole can turn.

Often used to start and finish lashings.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

This knot is the "general utility" hitch for when you need a quick, simple method of fastening a rope around a post, spar or stake.

Her's how you tie a Clove Hitch:

1. Make a turn with the rope around the object and over itself.

2. Take a second turn with the rope around the object.

Pull the end up under the second turn so it is between the rope and the object.  
Tighten by pulling on both ends.

If you are in a situation where the clove hitch may unroll, add a couple of half hitches with the running end to the standing end of the knot, turning it into a "Clove Hitch and Two Half Hitches"!

When pioneering, use the [Round turn and two half hitches](#) to start and finish your lashings instead of the Clove Hitch.  
It won't unroll, and is easier to finish tying off.  
It just doesn't look as neat!



## Figure Eight Knot

*(Flemish Knot, Savoy Knot)*

A useful "STOP" knot to temporarily bulk out the end of a rope or cord the finished knot looks like its name.

It is superior to using a [Thumb Knot](#), because it does not jam so easily.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

The figure eight is useful to temporarily stop the ends of a rope fraying, before it is whipped.

To tie:

1. Make underhand loop, bringing end around and over the standing part.
2. Pass end under, then up through the loop.
3. Draw up tight.



## Fisherman's Knot

*(Angler's knot, English knot, Englishman's bend, Halibut knot, True Lover's bend, Waterman's knot)*

The Fisherman's knot is used to tie two ropes of **EQUAL THICKNESS** together.

In other cases, use a method of bending two ropes together, such as a [Sheetbend](#), a [Double Sheetbend](#)

It is used by fishermen to join fishing line, and is very effective with small diameter strings and twines.

Tie a [Thumb knot](#), in the running end of the first rope around the second rope. Then tie a thumb knot in the second rope, around the first rope. Note the Thumb

knots are tied such they lie snugly against each other when the standing ends are pulled.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

When tying knots in monofilament line, moisten the line before pulling the knot tight. This helps to stop the line heating up with friction, which weakens it.



## Lark's Head

*(Cow Hitch, Lanyard Hitch)*

The Lark's head knot is used to LOOSELY attach a rope to a pole or ring

The knot has two redeeming features, it is easy to tie, and it does not jam. However, it will slip fairly easily along the pole, and may slip undone when tied using man made fibre ropes.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

This is a knot to be avoided when a secure attachment is required. [The Round turn and two half hitches](#), and the [Clove hitch](#) are far more secure.



## Reef Knot

*(Square Knot)*

An excellent general purpose knot for tying two pieces of string or twine together, the reef knot is possibly the most commonly used knot for the job, and is easy to learn. However, it cannot be overly stressed that the Reef knot is not a long term or secure knot, and it should only be used to finish parcels or bindings. In other cases, use a more secure method of bending two ropes together, such as a [Sheetbend](#), a [Double Sheetbend](#), or a [Fisherman's Knot](#).



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

Unfortunately, the Reef knot can easily change into a slipping [Lark's Head](#), so it should never be used where life or limb are at risk.

Holding one end of each rope in each hand, pass the left rope over the right, and tuck under. Then pass the same rope, now in the right hand, over the left rope, and tuck under.

A common to chant "*Left over Right and Under, Right over Left and Under*" when tying the knot. (This can also be performed as "*Right over Left and Under, Left over Right and Under*".)



The reef knot can easily be undone by gripping one loose end, and pulling it back over the knot, in the opposite direction, thus straightening the rope which is pulled.

The other rope forms a [Lark's Head knot](#), and slips off the tugged rope.

The knot gets its name from its use on sailing ships, when the sails were "reefed" - rolled up and tied to the cross spar with a reef knot. To release the sail, the sailors would climb the rigging, and work their way along the cross spar, pulling the top end of the reef knot down. They only had to use one hand, holding on with the other. The weight of the sail would cause the reef knot to slip, and the sail would be released.

If you want to tie two ropes together of similar thickness then never use a Reef knot. Only use it with string and twine when tying parcels, whippings and bindings.

Never use this knot to join ropes of two different thicknesses.



## Taut line Hitch or Rolling Hitch

*(Magner's Hitch, Magnus Hitch)*



This hitch is really just an adjustable loop used for non-critical applications where you need to adjust the size of a loop to apply tension to guy lines, like on your tent.

This hitch is used to attach one rope to a second, in such a manner that the first rope can be easily slid along the second.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

The knot can be considered a [Clove hitch](#) with an additional turn.

When tension is applied and the ropes form a straight line, the rolling hitch will lock onto the first rope. When the tension is released, the hitch can be loosened and slid along the first rope to a new location.

The tension must be applied on the side of the knot with the extra turn.

Use this knot if you have a guy rope with no adjuster.

Create a loop on the end of a second rope which is slipped over the peg. Use a rolling hitch to attach the second rope to the guyline. Alternatively, take the guyline around the peg and tie the Rolling hitch back onto the standing part of the guyline, above the peg, thus forming an adjustable loop.

Also known as the [Tautline Hitch](#).

When adjustments are complete, lock the rolling hitch into place by using a stop knot such as a [figure eight](#) in the first rope, below the Rolling hitch, to stop it slipping.

Since it will only slide one way, the Taut-line hitch is often used on tent ropes. The taut-line hitch will hold firmly on a smooth pole. Place rope end around pole, make a turn below it, then bring rope up across the standing part around the pole and tuck through.

The knot must be drawn up very snugly to work, and may not work at all on especially stiff or slippery rope.

Don't expect too much from it. It's not a very secure loop.

If you tie down a load on the back of a truck with this, you're likely to find that your lines have gone slack after a few miles.



## Round turn and two half hitches

Used to secure a rope to a pole, or to start or finish a lashing. Pass the running end of the rope over the pole twice. Then pass the running end over the standing part of rope, and tuck it back up and under itself, forming a half hitch. Repeat this for a second half hitch.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

This knot has a redeeming feature

it rarely jams!

Superior to a [Clove hitch](#) for starting and finishing a lashing as the half hitches prevent this knot from unrolling, as they have the effect of locking the knot. [The Clove hitch](#) looks neater but it has a tendency to unroll, and can be difficult to tie tightly when tying off.



## Sheepshank

The Sheepshank is a shortening knot, which enables a rope to be shortened non-destructively.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

The knot is only really secure under tension, it will fall apart when slack.

Use up to five half hitches each end of the Sheepshank to make the knot more secure, and for fine tuning the shortening.

Try to refrain from cutting ropes to shorten them!

Always use a shortening knot such as the Sheepshank, or coil the excess.



## Sheet Bend

*(Flag Bend, Common Bend)*

The Sheetbend is commonly used to tie two ropes of unequal thickness together. The thicker rope of the two is used to form a bight, and the thinner rope is passed up through the bight, around the back of the bight, and then tucked under itself.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

The knot should be tied with both ends coming off the same side of the bend, as illustrated here. However it can easily be accidentally tied with the ends coming off opposite sides of the bend, when it is known as the [Left Handed Sheet Bend](#).

The [Left Handed Sheet Bend](#) is to be avoided as it is less secure.

If the ropes are of very unequal thickness, or placed under a lot of tension, use a [Double Sheetbend](#).



## Double Sheet Bend

The Double Sheetbend is a more secure form of the [Sheetbend](#).



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

The thicker rope of the two is used to form a bight, and the thinner rope is passed up through the bight, around the back of the bight, around again before tucking under itself.

It is particularly useful when the thickness of the two ropes varies considerably, or when a more secure Sheetbend is required.



## Left Handed Sheet Bend

This knot is a wrongly tied [Sheetbend](#), a very easy mistake to make. The ends of the ropes should both come off the same side of the knot, and **NOT** off opposite sides as shown here. The knot strength is severely reduced, and this knot should be avoided.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

Avoid this knot under all circumstances.  
Always use a [Sheetbend](#).



## Thumb Knot

*(Overhand Knot)*

This is the simplest knot of all.  
It is commonly use to temporarily "stop" the end of a fraying rope.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
Click The Refresh Button

The overhand knot is commonly tied in a bight formed at the end of a rope, forming the Overhand Loop.

The Thumbknot jams easily so it is far better to use a [figure eight knot](#) to stop the end of a fraying rope.



## Timber Hitch

Used to attach a rope to a log, or where security is not an issue. This knot tightens under strain, but comes undone extremely easily when the rope is slack.



If There is NO animation of this knot  
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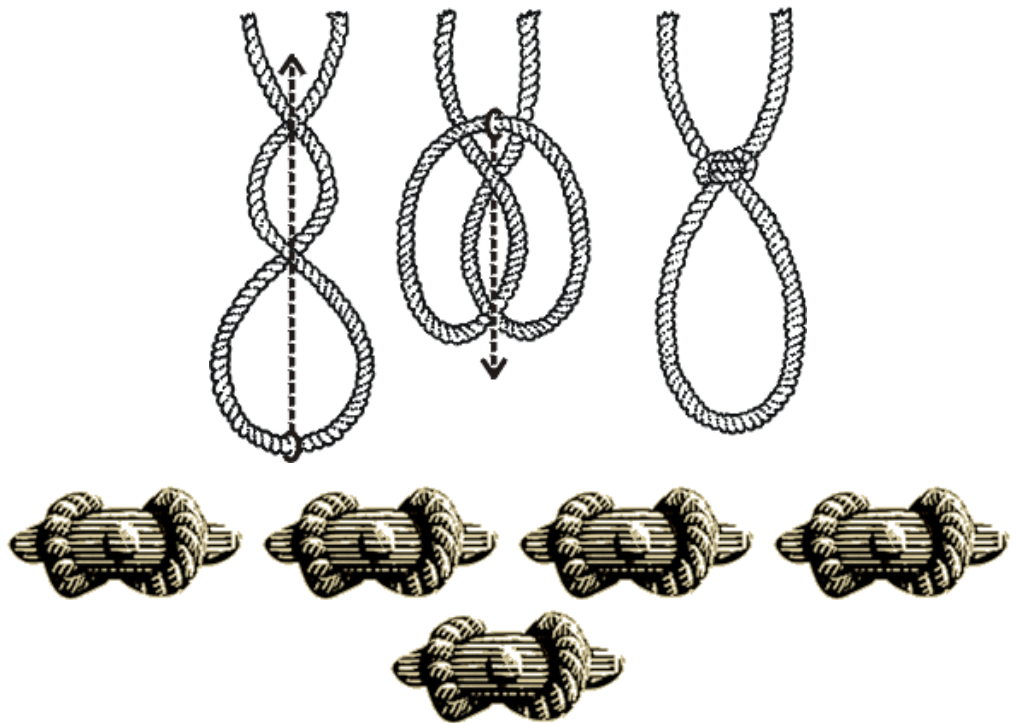
Wrap the rope around the log, then pass the running end around the standing part of the rope. Finally twist the running end around itself three or four times.  
(Note: this is only shown twice in the animation.)

A useful knot around camp, the timber hitch will allow you to haul logs, timbers, pipe, and other cumbersome objects. You can count on this knot to never jam or slip. It's a good idea to complete this hitch with a half-hitch at the hauling end so the load won't twist.



## Butterfly Noose

When you need a loop in the middle of a rope that will not slip you will find this knot useful. You can create multiple hand or foot holds along a long rope or even place loops in your fishing line. This knot will never jam no matter what direction the load comes from.



## Bight, Loop, Overhand

Knots are formed by using the bight-turn-tuck. Even the most complex knot can be figured out if you remember these terms.

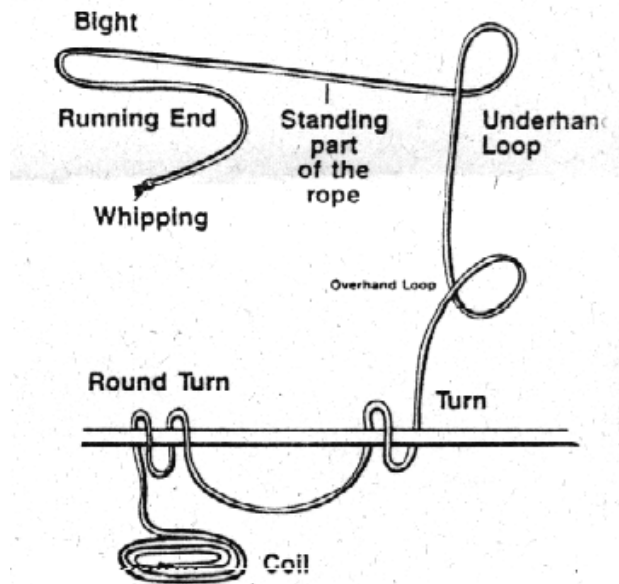
**The bight** is formed by laying the end of the rope against the standing part or long end.

Loops, overhand or underhand, are just what their names say.

With these three turns, you can make any sort of knot.

A turn is wrapping the rope around something and a tuck is to insert the

running end or a bight into a loop.



## Glossary

**Bend** - A bend is used to tie two ropes together, as in the Sheetbend. Technically, even the Reef knot is a bend.

**Bight** a semi-circle of rope where the rope does not cross itself; also the part of the rope between the standing part and the end that can be used in tying the knot

Bight can have two meanings:

-- The main part of the rope from the running end to the standing end *Also known as Standing Part*

-- Where the rope is bent back to form a loop. An open curve in a line

**Bitter End** - The end of the line that you work with in tying knots. *Also known as Running End*

**Dress** - to remove slack in the knot by drawing up the knot neatly; to make sure the knot is tied correctly, that all parts are where they should be.

**Friction Hitch** - a knot tied directly to the standing part, another rope, or a cylindrical object that is adjustable (can be slid) when the knot itself is grabbed and moved, but otherwise stays put (from friction) when the load is on the standing part

**Hitch** - a knot that attaches a rope directly to an object

A hitch is used to tie a rope to a spar, ring or post, such as the Clove hitch. Hitches can also be used to tie one rope ONTO another rope, as in the Rolling hitch.

**Jam** - when the knot tightens under tension and you cannot get it undone!

**Knot** - Strictly speaking, a knot is tied in the end of a line as a stopper, such as the Thumb knot or figure eight knot.

**Loop** (sometimes called an EYE) - when a bight is closed (that is, when it crosses

the line).

a circle of rope in which the rope crosses itself

**Overhand Loop** - a loop passing over the standing part.

**Running End** - the end of the rope that is being used to tie the knot. Also known as Bitter End

**Set** - to fully tighten a knot by pulling on all parts

**Slip** - to use a bight of rope instead of the end when finishing tying a knot; used to make untying a knot easier

**Standing End** - the static end of the rope.

**Standing Part** - The main length of line. *Also referred to as The Bight*

the part of the rope not used in the knot itself

**Stopper knots** are used to stop the end of a rope fraying, or to stop it running through a small hole or constriction.

**Twist** - sort of self explanatory: the line is twisted around another.

**Underhand Loop** - a loop passing under the standing part.



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Camping Etiquette

- First of all, follow the rules of your campground. **These rules apply to everyone.**

*For example:*

- If it says, "No pets"



then you will need to find a place for your pet.

- If pets are allowed, clean up after your pet.

Be a responsible pet owner.

Irresponsible pet owners are what's causing many campgrounds to not allow pets.

- Most of your campgrounds have designated quiet hours, abide by them. They are usually from 11:00 p.m. to 6 a.m

Being tent campers that we are, I suppose we are more sensitive to noise at bedtime.

It's really surprising how disruptive a seemingly minor amount of noise can be.

So whatever kind of camper you may be - please try to remember that many campers are facing a day on the road or a full day of activity in the morning. When the quiet hour comes we are just that - quiet.

If we want to stay up we will do so being mindful of noise, In any case we retire within an hour and are therefore "fully silent". This may not be your idea of fun but it's really the only way unless you're really secluded.

Ask me I heard you "chatting" till 3:00AM!

- If there's a posted speed limit, abide by it!

- Use the proper trash receptacles for your garbage - recycle items in the recycle bin and garbage in the garbage container.



*When walking around the campground with a beverage, throw your empty can or cup in the proper receptacle, not along side the road. These things are not part of the nature you have come to see.*

[If you carry it in, please carry it out](#)  
*this will eliminate litter*

- 🔪 Do not chop on still standing trees.
- Bring your own firewood, so you don't have to rely on what may or may not be at the campground.
- You may even want to call the campground to find out if they sell firewood and, if so, what is the price and time of sale.
- If the campground doesn't sell firewood, many local gas stations or stores sell firewood bundles. It may be a little pricey and you may need to buy quite a few of these little bundles

[Other places to find firewood](#)

Do what you've got to do,  
**but please don't chop on the trees.**

Even the dead trees are home to many nature animals. You may be destroying an animal's home and effecting a part of nature's balance.

- 🔪 Do not pound nails or anything else into the trees.

[There are inexpensive hangers you can purchase to safely hang your lantern from trees without damaging them.](#)

- 🔪 If you are a smoker, please put your cigarette butts and package wrappers in the firepit.

If you smoke in your tent, bring along an ashtray

*The firepit is like a huge ashtray, and it won't take much effort on your part to put the butts in the firepit.*

*The next campers may not smoke and will very much appreciate the little effort it took to put your cigarette butts in the firepit.*

*Cigarette butts are not a part of nature and don't belong on campground roads or trails.*

*After a walk or hike, bring your cigarette butts back to your firepit or take along a portable ashtray.*

- 🔪 Beer bottle tops need to go in the trash, not the firepit or the ground.

*Beer bottle tops on the ground will cause an injury and/or possible damage to someone's tent if they don't see the top.*

*Plus, beer bottle tops are not a part of nature and don't belong on the ground.*

- 🔪 Don't burn anything but paper or wood in your firepit.

Plastic only melts and puts bad fumes into our air -  
the air you left the city for!  
Aluminum cans don't burn.

👤 Leftover sparklers from the Fourth of July don't burn either, so please take a few minutes to toss these in the trash.

👤 Respect each others campsites.

Families in essence "rent" out the site they use during their camping trip. This space is theirs to use during the period they have paid for. Please don't cut through other's campsites on the way to the bathrooms, showers, trails, etc.

👤 If you like music please keep it to your campsite. Some campers (*like me!*) would rather listen to nature.

👤 Not exactly "etiquette" but it will help you  
(*and everyone else!*)  
have more fun . . .

If there is any kind of a problem in your campground do not hesitate to **contact the Rangers immediately.**

Your Campground Hosts usually are able to contact the Rangers directly. If your campground does not have a Camp Host, contact numbers for Rangers are usually posted near the check-in/registration area. If your Host is not available at the time you stop by to report the problem, leave a note. Please don't wait until the morning to report noisy campers from the night before. If campers are really obnoxious they can and do get evicted! However, it is best if the Rangers witness this, so telling them the next day won't often help.

If campers are too drunk to drive that night, they usually are given a time in the morning to be out.

Don't worry about these obnoxious campers thinking it was "you" who told the Rangers.

An obnoxious camper could have been reported by anyone!!

👤 Now on to the gross, but necessary. . .

please don't potty in the woods.

*It is so disgusting (and unhealthy!) to walk into a beautiful site and find the edges of it dotted with white tissue.*

*Or consider this scene . . .*

*campers cruising the campground to find just the right campsite. They finally find it and are proud. Then as their weekend or week goes on, as they sit anywhere in their camp, you can't help but notice all the tissue that is now dotting the perimeter of their site. If you really do not want to walk to the bathrooms, please consider bringing some sort of port-a-potti.*



[Waste Disposal: The Inside Scoop on How To Poop](#)

👤 More indelicate, but necessary . . .

ladies, please properly dispose of your "feminine hygiene products."

*Believe it or not, these too are found dotting the edges of the campsites. Will you pick this same campsite, the one where you left these products at the edge of the woods, the next time you come out camping?*

*Most bathrooms have receptacles for these products. Please use the containers! The next time you use the bathroom, which stall are you going to pick? The one where you know you left your used sanitary product on the back of the toilet or the next one???*

👉 More gross, but necessary . . .

and gentlemen, please properly dispose of your prophylactics. *Yes, believe it our not, these too, are found not far from where tents are pitched.*

Don't throw them in the water either.

👉 Teach children not to play in the shower rooms.

It is most annoying to go to the washroom and have children yelling, in fun and exuberance to be sure. The acoustics in washrooms magnifies sound so it can really hurt to go into a washroom where children are yelling at the top of their lungs. They can do it outside, or in the lake or river facilities where it is expected. Also this is very unfriendly to take up time in the showers when you aren't using them. Remember, everyone else uses those showers too, and some use them during the day so the lines won't be so long at night or in the morning.

👉 Lastly, many campers have their favorite campsite.

Think before you leave. The next time you come to this site, is this how you want it to look? Do you really want to walk into your favorite site with your beer bottles still heaped in the fire pit and trash left scattered around your site? Wouldn't you prefer the campground staff is spending their time making improvements at your campground rather than spending their time simply picking up after campers.

### **NO TRACE!**

Just take 15 minutes or so and do a group effort to quickly pick up your campsite.

If we all follow this simple, commonsense, camping etiquette the beautiful campgrounds we are enjoying now with our families will still be beautiful when our children have their families and want to take them camping!!





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RECYCLE-A-BIKE

Recycle-A-Bicycle is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development in New York City



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## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

# Safe Drinking Water

*When you are in the great outdoors -  
you need to drink a lot of water to stay healthy  
(at least one gallon per day for every person in your party).*

*There's just one question,  
"Is the water safe to drink?".*

The kind of water that is available to you depends on the type of camping you are doing. If you are camping in a campground with a water source provided your needs will differ from a backpacking family who cannot carry all of the water needed for their trip.

[Water from a natural source such as rivers and streams](#)

[Water provided by recreation facilities](#)



## Backcountry Water Sources

Generally, your water source is a stream, a lake, or a spring.

The water may taste wonderfully clear -

however,



# *Beware!*

There may be nasty things lurking in your next drink!

Protozoa and larger parasites, bacteria, and viruses all can be found in backcountry water sources.

If you drink 'em without treating the water first you may get quite ill. I could describe some symptoms but I don't want to gross anybody out!

So how do we get rid of these 'water hazards'?  
There are several different ways that are quite effective.

### **1. Boil your water.**

This is the only free water treatment you'll find - but the water tastes a bit funny afterwards.

Boiling is the surefire way to purify water.

No waterborne microorganism can survive a rolling boil. It must be boiled for 5 minutes or more. One of the advantages of boiling water is there is no need to filter or chemically disinfect water that will be used to cook with. Just dip your pot in the stream set it on the stove, and bring it to a boil before adding your noodles, or other food items. The disadvantage of boiling water is it takes time and fuel.

### **2. Iodine disinfection**

There are three forms of iodine treatments; crystals, tablets, and liquid.

For years iodine has been the most efficient way for backpackers to disinfect water, because it is lightweight, cheap, and is easy to do. But iodine has some downsides. It does nothing to make murky, foul-tasting water more appealing. Iodine itself has a taste most people find unpleasant. But the most important disadvantage of iodine tablets, is that it has been recently discovered that iodine does not kill *Cryptosporidium*, a protozoan that's becoming increasingly common in North America backcountry water. But some people prefer the bad taste and prefer to take their chance with *Cryptosporidium* in exchange for the lightweight and simplicity of iodine treatments. Another disadvantage of iodine is it takes as long as half an hour, depending on the water temperature, for effective disinfecting.

Some iodine tablets come with "neutralizing pills" that alleviate the unpleasant taste and smell of the iodine.

### **3. Filtration**

Filters physically strain out microorganisms larger than a certain size.

There are two different kinds of water filters. There are kinds that remove, or filter out, protozoa's and bacteria, and there are filters that "purify," which means they also remove viruses as well as protozoa and bacteria.

Whatever type you choose depends on how much of a chance you're willing to take as well how much you're willing to spend. Purifiers are the safer way to go but they cost more and often clog faster than non-purifiers. Because a clogged purifier does you as much good as a tent with holes, this is something to consider when shopping.

### **Filter elements**

These following are what your filter could be made of, and it's

construction, which can be depth or surface. Most good filters today are depth filters. This means that the filter element has some thickness, or depth to it. The complex structure also captures the offending microorganisms. Depth filters can often be cleaned by scrubbing or backwashing. Surface filters, also known as membrane filters, have a thinner, sheet like construction that tends to clog quickly.

***Your filter's possible elements:***

**Carbon.**

Activated carbon strains out organic chemicals like herbicides, pesticides, and chlorine. It is always used in conjunction with another filter material.

**Ceramic.**

By nature, ceramic is porous, intricate material with lots of little nooks and crannies that capture microorganisms. The best thing ceramic filters is they can be washed time and time again before they need to be replaced. The draw back of ceramic filters is they are fragile, especially in cold weather.

**Fiberglass or glass fiber.**

Glass fibers are long and slick and can be molded into intricate structures that effectively catch the microscopic bad guys. Fiberglass doesn't last as long as ceramics, but is more durable.

- If you camp a great deal a filter might be right for you.
  - Water filters produce the best tasting water.
  - Only water filters can remove pollutants from water.
    - Water filters do require spare filters - so stock up!
- Filtration devices are the most expensive alternative.
  - Water filters can be a bit bulky to carry.

Whatever method you choose -  
please be careful -  
and have fun!

## **Recreation Facility Water Sources**

Your favorite campground has running water; maybe even showers.  
Is that all you need to know?

**I don't think so.**

Many recreation facilities offer water that is not potable  
(*not fit to drink*).

This is water for washing, showering, and toilets that is not fit for human consumption. These water sources are usually well marked with warnings that the water is not for drinking -

but please use care!

Potable water is considered safe for drinking -  
but does that mean you want to drink it?

Many parks treat their water with the same kind of chlorine you would use in your pool. This kind of treatment is not an exact science. Parks that have their own water system are required to test the water on a regular basis.

The testing is simple -  
but it is also quite easy to fowl it up  
*(park employees are not rocket scientists)*  
and poor testing creates meaningless results.

Also -  
if the water tests happen to fail  
*(show nasty things growing in the water)*  
the day after you visit -  
you may get an unpleasant surprise.

A friend of mine used to work at and housed in barracks on site at Campground Park. He told me there were warnings in the kitchen and bathroom recommending that employees not drink the water. Bottled water was provided by thier employer. When he asked about it - He was told that the water was ok to drink on a short term basis but you shouldn't consume it over a long period of time. The water was considered safe enough for campers but not safe for employees?

I would not recommend drinking water anyplace where you are unsure of its purity.

Some recreation areas have natural springs or wells with incredibly good water.

Enjoy the water where you can -  
and bring your own everyplace else.

We bring large five gallon water jugs of our own water!



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BIKE SALE



## FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING

### Fire Starters

for your campfire

### Here is our summary of various types of home-made Fire Starters.

- Use pine cones covered with wax.\*\*
- Pack charcoal in paper egg cartons and tie shut. When ready to use, just light the carton.
- Put a piece of charcoal in each section of a paper egg carton. Cover with melted wax.\*\* Tear apart and use as needed.  
*You can also use sawdust, dryer lint or Pistachio shells instead of the charcoal.*
- Take 100% cotton balls and thoroughly rub Vaseline into them. Keep in a ziplock bag.
- Newspaper cut into strips (3"-4" wide). Roll up and tie with string. Cover with melted wax.\*\*
- Use lint from your dryer as a fire starter.
- Bundle about 10-12 Diamond brand "strike-anywhere" wooden kitchen matches together with waxed dental floss. The heads of the matches should all be pointing in the same direction. Generously soak the bundle of matches (*except heads*) in melted paraffin wax\*\* to waterproof and to provide a long burn time. Dip heads lightly only to waterproof them.

Simply strike on flat rock to ignite.

- Cut a cotton cord into 1" lengths and soak in melted wax.\*\*  
Let dry and store in empty film container or ziplock bag.
- These are called candy kisses. Use the small 6" emergency candles and wrap them up in waxed paper.  
Tie/twist both ends of the waxed paper to seal in the candle  
*(looks like a salt water taffy candy).*  
Light an end when you are ready to start your fire.
- Cut waxed milk cartons into strips to be used as kindling for your campfire.
  - Stuff paper towel or toilet paper rolls with paper.
  - To get your charcoal pieces ready quicker, use a [charcoal chimney](#).
    - Newspaper crumbled into a ball
    - Use dried pine needles
    - Soak a piece of charcoal in lighter fluid.  
Coat with wax.\*\*
    - Use small condiment or "sample-size" cups.  
Add a long wick to each cup and fill with melted wax.\*\*  
*You can also fill them with sawdust.*
    - Stack of small pieces of cardboard covered in wax\*\*
- Waterproof your matches by dipping them in wax\*\* or coating them with clear nail polish
- Use cotton string about 3-4" long, put in wax paper bathroom cup with about an inch hanging over the edge.  
Fill cup nearly to the top with saw dust and pour melted wax into the cup.  
The saw dust will compact and become waterproof. The extra string length is a wick to start burning the starter, but can also be tied to another starter string through a pack loop to carry outside your pack.

**\* Never use liquid igniters on your campfire.**

*Example: lighter fluid, gasoline etc.*

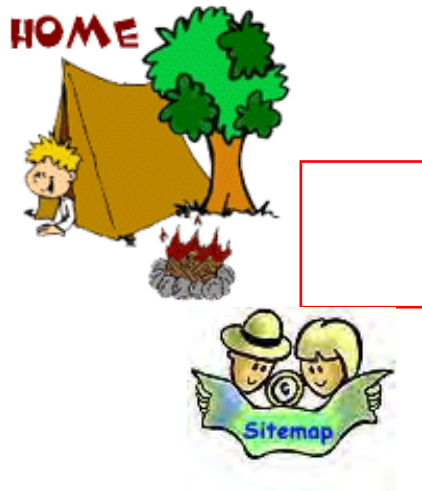
\*\* When melting wax, only use a double broiler set up.

*Two pots, one which sits on top of the other. The bottom pot containing boiling water, the top pot contains whatever is being cooked. This tool is useful for making delicate sauces or melting chocolate or any other occasion when you don't want to have direct heat on the food which is being cooked.*

*You can improvise a double boiler by placing the items to be cooked in a metal bowl,*

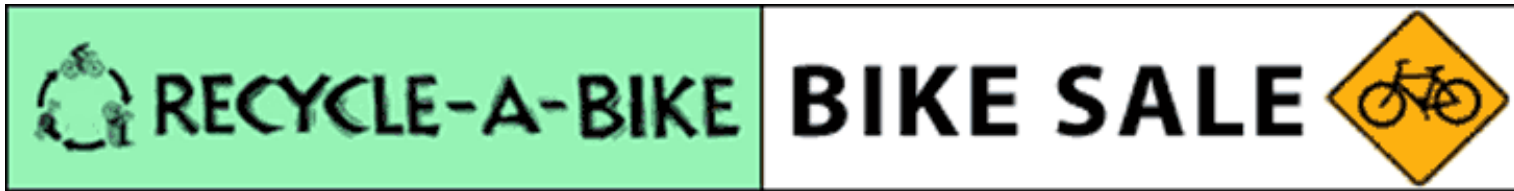
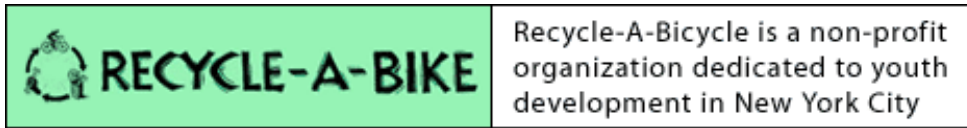
*which is placed over a pot of boiling water.*

Melted wax can easily ignite.  
Have a fire extinguisher handy in cause of emergency.



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF CAMPING BROKEN ZIPPER?

## Preventing and Repairing Blow-outs

Zippers are the most under-appreciated workhorse-fastener on today's outdoor equipment. They are used and abused to such a level it is often a wonder they last as long as they do. The most important thing you can do is treat your zippers with care. Keep them clean by flushing them with water after each trip. I don't recommend using a silicon lubricant on the zipper's teeth since that only serves to attract more dirt.

Pull your zipper sides together when closing your pack or tent door.

Slow your zipping pace when closing a zipper, especially around tight corners.

The most common reason coiled zippers (*the one's found on most gear these days*) won't close is a worn slider—a slider is the bit of hardware with the tab on it that you pull on to close or open the zipper's teeth.

If the teeth of your zipper stay open after a pass by the slider, reach for your pliers. Work the slider back up to the top of the zipper or the point where the zipper would be open if it was working—take your time, this can be a challenge. Now, gently squeeze one side and then the other of the slider, using equal pressure

**(don't over squeeze as you can jam the slider or even crush the zipper coils).**

Try the zipper again.

Do this several more times until the coils remain closed after a pass by the slider. If this fails to work, you need a new slider and should consult your nearest specialty outdoor store for advice.

Contributed By: Michael Hodgson

Michael Hodgson is an award-winning journalist and author of numerous books including *Camping for Dummies*, *Compass and Map Navigator*, and *Facing the Extreme*. He is a volunteer instructor for the American Red Cross, Nevada County Sheriff's

# Take a break from the normal rhythm of life . . . kick back on a camping trip.

*Just Go!*

The best time to start enjoying the outdoors is right now.

Throughout this site you may come across these icons:



This Icon will indicate that the information following pertains to Backcountry Camping.  
*(Extreme camping, in the back woods, no modern facilities, etc.)*



This Icon will indicate that the information following pertains to Pay Campground Camping.  
*(modern facilities, etc.)*

This site is geared mainly towards Family Camping in Pay Campground Sites, therefore, if there is NO ICON besides the information you are reading then it pertains to Pay Campground Camping

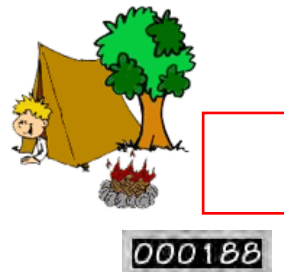
Campgrounds for \$10.00 a day... EVERYDAY!...



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