

Pack 55 – Recommended Camping Equipment October 2016

Borrow or just get enough for the first campout; then you will see what you need, and others use.

Tents

Always add at least one or two persons to the size of tent you need. You always need more room. Do not buy a plastic or nylon waterproof tent – they not only keep the rain out they hold plenty of water vapors our bodies expel every night making it rain inside your tent. Dome tents are best with a separate rain-fly (top cover that goes over the poles) that extends down as close to the ground as possible. You can get a small bottle of seam sealer at Academy to repair minimal leaks. Get a tent with a waterproof floor and then use a plastic ground cloth under that but not protruding from under the tent. A vestibule for storing shoes outside the tent is right. REI on Westheimer @ Hillcroft has the best tents. Academy and discount store tents are OK since you will surely buy another one in two years as the older boys want to sleep away from the family. Buy a few extra stakes when you get the tent. Be sure to set up your new tent before you go camping. You may be setting up in the dark.

Sleeping

For the first trip any sleeping bag will do, and you can always bring blankets. Get one good to 20 degrees or below with synthetic filling. Cotton is thick and hard to dry out. If cold, always wear a soft cap covering your ears. Ear plugs that stop sound are also good. Change into fresh dry clothes especially socks to sleep, the clothes you have been wearing hold a significant amount of moisture causing you to chill at night. Bring a pillow. If you don't have any pad, buy a closed cell foam sleeping pad or better a Therm-a-rest at Academy, about \$50. Air mattresses are not real comfy unless they are the heavy duty type and make for a cold bed in cold weather.

Clothing

Dress in layers as the temperature varies a lot during the day. No cotton clothes. Tennis shoes are OK, but waterproof hiking boots are better in the rain. Use a rain suit with pants that will keep feet dry. No ponchos-dangerous around fires. Umbrellas can be handy. Bring twice as much footwear as you think you will need—there's always water around. Boys wear their uniforms to the Saturday evening Campfire and the Sunday service. A small backpack with a bottle of water, & whistle is good to have.

Cooking

Decisions about food are left to the Den. Most Dens find it more economical, more practical and more fun to do this as a group. Each Den should have a couple of parents who share the Role of Camp Master, the person in charge of menus, shopping and assigning jobs to all attendees. There is also strong friendships both among the boys and the parents in doing this together. Some collect an annual camping food fee at the beginning of the year, others per campout. Most make Friday dinner separately by family, then do Sat Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner, and Sun Breakfast as a group. Food and supplies are best kept in other dry ice chests or large plastic tubs with tight-fitting lids as raccoons are not deterred by loose fitting tops, let alone paper grocery sacks!

Miscellaneous

Fishing tackle is fun but bends down the barbs on hooks, as are footballs and soccer. Bring plenty of flashlights, headlights for boys and batteries. Folding chairs are needed around the campfire. Bring toilet paper and toiletries and towels. We always have toilets and usually minimal showers. Small and thick ropes are always of good use for, clothes lines, frames to suspend tarp roofs, to safely suspend food bags over tree limbs out of the reach of animals.

For the Den

Cooking—you will need at least two or three propane stove burners and two cans for each burner. No liquid fuel or charcoal lighter unless substantial. Buy a charcoal lighter (round can) and bring newspaper—they work great. A couple of long folding tables for serving are useful. Bring lots of pots and pans and two coffee pots plus one for hot chocolate. Three large wash tubs for soapy water, bleach or boiling water and rinse for wash-up. Each person brings plates and utensils—no paper or plastic as Scouts are thrifty! Self-supporting grills are good for cooking over a fire but make a mess on pans. Bring cameras, firewood, first aid kit. A good tarpaulin that you can cook under in the rain or use for shade is needed for each den. Lots of ice and drinking water as the good water at the

campsites is usually not too tasty although it is safe. Every den needs at least one large LED lantern, another large bucket, and shovel for fire safety.

Check out: rei.com, campmor.com, nemoequipment.com, sierra-trading.com, campchef.com, outdoorcooking.com, backcountry.com and your local academy.