

Section H: CAMPING IN NON-ESTABLISHED CAMPSITES

By Ming Berka

A non-established campsite may be an open field which is accessible with a vehicle, or a campsite that one needs to hike into, (canoe or ski into, etc.) Depending on the site, there may or may not be any buildings, tables, fire pits, drinking water, toilets or garbage facilities. Group campsites at a provincial campground and camping at SOAR are two examples of non-established campsites.

ADVENTURE CAMPING PLANNING TIMELINE (from Girl Guides of Canada website)

<https://memberzone.girlguides.ca/ProgramResources/CampingAndOutdoors/AdventureCamping/SitePages/Home.aspx>

This web page also includes a personal gear list, group gear list, and Wilderness First Aid list, as well as information for specific activity such as kayaking, snow camping etc.

4-9 months prior to adventure camp

- Decision to adventure camp – based upon interest from both girl and leaders
- Set dates for trip – what time of year would you like to go?
- Check destination – see what times of year are appropriate for trip; check for times when the area is less populated
- Set length of trip
- What is your budget?
- Review the OAL Guide to Adventure Camping
- Review Safe Guide for required qualifications; note wilderness first aider requirements
- Choose qualified Guiders/facilitators
- See if the area you will be camping in requires permits, reservations and/or youth group expedition registration and, if necessary, complete the reservation or permit process

12-16 weeks prior to adventure camp

- Prepare a detailed budget
- Assign responsibilities for detailed planning
- Purchase/gather maps and guidebooks for the area and review these resources
- Source and book equipment/gear
- Meet with parents and participants to discuss trip details, budget, prerequisites, expectations (both their and yours), transportation, and fundraising if necessary
- Set up an exercise/fitness plan/schedule in preparation for the trip; get active – the fitter you are the more enjoyable your wilderness adventure will be
- Plan prerequisite trainings and/or skills nights for all participants
- Start work on emergency response plan
- Arrange/plan transportation

Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area.

4-12 weeks prior to adventure camp

- Research the area in which you want to camp. It is ideal if one of the Guiders/facilitators is familiar with and has experience in the area in which you will be adventure camping
- Create a detailed daily itinerary
- Distribute a personal gear list and include any specific information related to the site (e.g. map with directions, trip start time, etc.)
- Distribute Safe Guide forms to parents/guardians and develop an emergency contact list and a description of participants list

3-4 weeks prior to adventure camp

- Collect Safe Guide parent/guardian permission forms and participant camp fees
- Submit appropriate Safe Guide paperwork at least 3 weeks prior to the trip
- Arrange for someone to be the home contact person (HCP)
- Finalize itinerary
- Create a menu and a shopping list based on numbers attending
- Start dehydrating food
- Review all Health forms with the wilderness first aider, note any food or health concerns

1 week prior to adventure camp

- Provide Home Contact Person with final participant list and emergency contact list
- Assemble adventure camping gear and equipment
- Shop for groceries and other trip needs
- Pack and food preparation
- Go through final preparation checklist, including: checking weather forecasts; tripping area updates including trail updates and if water in the area is potable; road conditions; vehicles; transportation schedules; confirmation of meeting place and time; leader gear and equipment checks; participants' and group gear; mind-map (visualize how the trip plays out)

Go adventure camping!

- Have fun!
- Keep a trip/gear log
- Debriefing/communication during trip
- Follow leave no trace principles

End of adventure camp

- Debriefing/evaluations with participants and co-Guiders
- Do a complete equipment check and final check of adventure campsite
- Send thanks to Guiders/facilitators, girls and parents, Home Contact Person

Post adventure camp

- Review evaluations and trip logs to assist in planning your next adventure camp
- Submit any incident reports
- Ensure all expenses are paid out and complete actual expense record
- Archive forms as outlined in GGC Policies

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BACKPACKING KIT LIST (for 3 days)

- Hiking boots – comfortable & well broken in
- Backpack with cover
- Walking stick(s) or ski poles
- Camp shoes – for around the camp
- Warm sleeping bag
- Ensolite or Thermarest
- Sit upon
- Small pillow and case
- 1 pair of pants
- 1 pair of shorts
- 2 shirts (long and short sleeve)
- 3 changes of underwear
- 4 pairs of socks (some heavy and some light)
- 1 warm pyjamas
- 1 warm sweater
- 1 jacket (water resistant)
- Toque and mittens
- Hat and a bandana
- Sunglasses
- Rain gear (jacket and pants)
- Small towel and face cloth
- Toiletries in a bag – toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant, sanitary supplies, hairbrush elastics for long hair
- Water bottle – 1 litre minimum with a screw-on lid
- Flashlight with spare batteries (and bulb)
- Sunscreen, insect repellent (non-aerosol), Blistex
- Toilet paper for 3 days
- Small personal First Aid kit (see below)
- Small personal survival kit (see below)
- Bowl, spoon, knife and mug in a dippy bag
- Whistle
- Personal medicine, inhalers, epi-pens etc.
- Optional items:**
- camera and playing cards
- swim suit

PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT

In a freezer weight Zip Lock bag, you should have:

- Absorbent pads
- Adhesive tape
- Antiseptic wipes
- Band-aids
- Crepe bandage
- Gauze pads
- Mole skin
- Pencil and paper
- Q-tips
- Quarters and loonies
- Safety pins
- Scissors
- Telfa pads
- Tensor bandage
- Triangular bandage
- Tweezers

PERSONAL SURVIVAL KIT

In a freezer weight Zip Lock bag, you should have:

- 2 orange garbage bags (for shelter)
- 7 to 10 m of strong thin cord (for building a shelter)
- Strike anywhere matches in a waterproof container
- Candle stub (for fire starter, or light)
- 1 square metre of heavy duty aluminium foil (makes a cup, pot or reflector, etc.)
- 1 loud whistle (instead of using your voice to call for help)
- A jack-knife

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DEHYDRATION

- Check the colour of your urine for signs of dehydration. It should be clear or very pale yellow. If it begins to darken in colour, you should drink more water and other liquids. Coffee and tea are diuretics, therefore drink herb tea, milk, or eat juicy fruits & vegetables.
- Drink water regularly throughout the day.
- One way to regulate the amount of water intake is to drink a cup (8 oz) of water at each meal as well as at each snack time.
- Another way is to fill a large (1-Litre) bottle of water at the beginning of the day and drink it at regular intervals until it is finished. Refill when empty. That way it's easier to keep track of how much water you have drunk that day.

(Heat) Cramps are brief but involuntary muscle spasms, also called "Charlie Horse". They usually occur in the muscles during exercise or at night and may be the result of insufficient liquid intake.

Heat Exhaustion may include difficulty in breathing, headache, feeling hot on head and neck, dizziness, heat cramps, chills, nausea, irritability, vomiting, extreme weakness and fatigue.

Heat Stroke may include rapid and shallow breathing, rapid heart beat, unusually high or low blood pressure, lack of sweating, mental confusion and disorientation, unconsciousness, physical collapse

A person who is suffering from heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke should:

- Stop the activity
- Move into a cool environment
- Remove excess clothing
- Drink more water and other liquids (but not coffee, tea, sodas or juice).
- Place an ice pack on the forehead or around the neck. Place a cold wet washcloth on the exposed skin and change the cloth frequently.
- Be immersed in cold water and get medical attention immediately.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET LOST

No-one knows in advance that they will get lost, but before you go out, be prepared to survive in the outdoors until rescued.

1. Never go on a hike alone. Don't get separated, unless one person is injured. One person may have to run for help, and if there is a third person, that person may need to stay with the injured person.
2. Plan your route carefully and what time you expect to return. You can also leave a note on the dash of your car with the estimated return time and the number of people in your group. It is also a good idea to tell a family member or a friend and notify them upon your return.
3. Remember that it gets dark in the woods about 2 hours earlier than outside the woods. Make your way out of the woods before it gets dark. Injuries are more likely to happen if you can't see your path.

Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area

4. Bring these Essentials:

- A. Bring your **map (or hiking book)** as it might be able to help you to match landmarks. Bring a compass but make sure you learn how to use it before leaving home. Don't rely on getting information from your electronic device as there may be no reception in the mountains.
 - B. **Water** – bring one litre of water per day, or 1.5 L on a hot day or if the activity is strenuous. Bring water purifying tablets for additional water.
 - C. **Emergency food** - Pack extra nutritious bars, but don't eat them as snacks. Reserve these until there is an emergency.
 - D. **Sun and bug protection** – a thin long sleeved shirt can give protection for both, or appropriate sprays.
 - E. **Extra clothing** – dress in layers, wear zip off pants, etc. The temperature can drop very quickly on top of a mountain or when you stop moving.
 - F. A **headlamp** is better than a flashlight because it will leave your hands free to grab trees or to build a fire. (Make sure you use fresh batteries and bring spares.)
 - G. A **Personal First-aid** kit (See above.)
 - H. A **Personal Survival Kit** (See above) including a jackknife.
 - I. A fully charged **cell phone**. When you realize that you're lost, call a friend or 911. If you wait until it's totally dark, it might take the rescuers longer to find and reach you. If there is enough power, leave the cell phone on as it is easier for the searchers to find you. Otherwise don't waste battery power unnecessarily.
5. Then **S.T.O.P.** **S** = sit down; **T** = think; **O** = observe your surroundings; **P** = prepare for survival by gathering materials to build a shelter and / or a fire. This helps psychologically.
 6. Stay put. (Hug a tree.) This increases your chances of being found because searchers usually search in grids. If you move into a grid that they had already searched, it might take them a lot longer to find you. Wandering causes you to use up energy which you need to conserve in order to survive the night.
 7. Building a fire in a clearing is important so that searchers will be able to see the fire better than under a heavy forest canopy, and also less likely to cause a forest fire. A fire will keep you warm, keep animals away, and will also give you something to focus on. The activity of gathering fire wood may also keep you warmer than just sitting.

Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area

MAKING WATER DRINKABLE

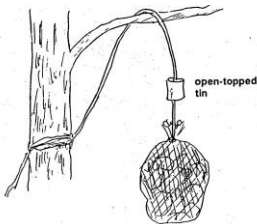
If you are not in an established campsite with a reliable source of drinking water, there are a few things you can do:

- **Boil the water** for at least one minute at full boil at sea level and 3 minutes on the mountain – if you don't suspect chemical contamination. Otherwise the amount of fuel to make it drinkable will be close to the weight of the water.
- **Disinfect the water** – put a few drops of chlorine bleach per litre in the drinking water. Use sparingly as some people get sick from it, and the taste is quite strong.
- **Filter / purify the water** – Check out Mountain Equipment Co-op's website for products to help with this.

FOOD STORAGE

All foods must be stored well away from sleeping tents in order not to attract insects and animals. A determined animal can get into almost any container, including coolers stored in vehicles – especially if it's visible through the window and / or is emitting smells. With this in mind, these are a few steps that will help to reduce animal invasions of your food supply.

- In the daytime, food can be kept in a cooler but it should be heavily weighted down with a huge rock, as raccoons are very agile at lifting lids.
- All non-perishable foods packaged in cardboard, paper or plastic bags must be stored in large plastic bins to avoid mice and raccoons getting at them. Next in priority are foods in hard plastic containers such as syrup, or drink containers such as iced tea mixes. Paper products such as napkins, etc. could also be stored in a tote if there's room.



At night store the cooler in a vehicle if possible. If not, rig a tree larder. Place fruits and vegetables in a mesh bag (not for dairy and meats). Tie a rope to the bag and throw the rope over a branch and then fasten the end around the tree trunk. Place an open-topped tin above the mesh bag. Note: **a tree larder is not as animal-proof as one would expect**. One reason is that branches are often not high enough, and many animals and birds are smart and can get into the tree larder.

GARBAGE AND RECYCLING IN NON-ESTABLISHED CAMPSITES

- Before leaving home, take some foods out of the bulky boxes and put them in reusable Ziplock bags. But keep the cooking instructions and nutritional information for those who need to read the ingredients.
- Except for things that can burn easily (and fires are allowed), all other garbage should be packed out and disposed of at home.

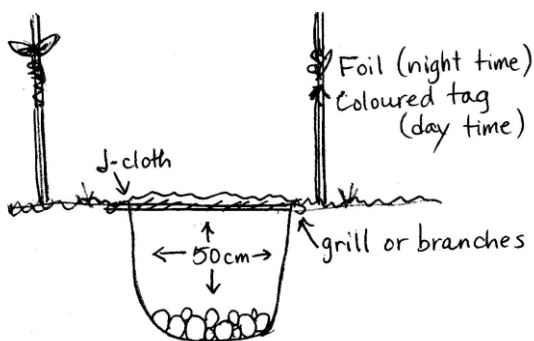
Way to Camp! This is the way we do it in Lions Area

- Burn paper, cardboard, and food scraps where fires are permitted.
- Wash out all returnable and recyclable glass, plastics, metal, tetra containers in soapy water, as odours can attract animals and insects. Remove lids and flatten what you can.
- Tin foil with food stuck to it should be burned a bit in the fire. Put the food side down on the fire, but because burning aluminium foil is not good for the environment, take the foil out of the fire as soon as the food bits have been burned off. Put used foil in the garbage.
- Put all other garbage in a bear proof storage box or in a vehicle if available. Raccoons can pry off lids and untie knots and mice can chew through bags, therefore you need to take extra precautions at night.
- If you don't have a vehicle to store the garbage, you could hang the garbage bag from a tree, but like the food larder, birds and some animals may get into the bag.

WASTE WATER (GREY WATER)

- Pour kitchen waste water (or liquids) into a bucket that is used specifically for waste water. Use a strainer to catch waste scraps, or put a J-cloth over the pail and keep it in place with 4 clothes pegs.
- The grey water bucket should be emptied frequently so that it does not spill on the person carrying it, or on the ground which might attract insects and animals.
- Use the grey water drain wherever it is available. But if there isn't a drain or sink, scatter the grey water over as large an area as possible, as long as it is at least 60 m away from a water source. Choose different places to scatter subsequent buckets of grey water. However if the camp has a large number of campers and / or if the camp lasts more than overnight, it is probably less harmful to the environment to dig an **LDP or Liquid Disposal Pit**. It is also called **LDU or Liquid Drain Unit**.
- Never dump grease into the LDP because it might attract animals which may fall through the screen into the LDP.

How to make an LDP or LDU



1. Dig a large hole – about 50 cm square by 50 cm deep in the ground.
2. Put a few rocks or pebbles at the bottom to help with drainage.
3. Use a grill, lash a grill, or use branches to cover the top of the hole.
4. Place a J-cloth over the grill / branches to catch food scraps. Burn the J-cloth / branches after every meal – or at least after breakfast and supper.
5. Place a couple of sticks in the ground around the LDP and tie with coloured ribbon (for daytime) and foil (for night-time) so people don't step into it.

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SPIT PIT

1. Although teeth brushing can be done at the LDP, it's not practical when there is a large number of campers. Designate a location for teeth brushing. The spot for a Spit Pit should be at the edge of the site, convenient and accessible, but not in a travelled area.
2. If allowed, dig a Spit Pit for each patrol. A Spit Pit is shallow and small than an LDP and is used mainly for brushing teeth and dumping body washing water. If holes are not allowed to be dug, spit into an ice cream bucket. When not in use, cover the bucket with the lid. When full or after a meal, dump the spit water into the LDP, and then rinse it with some water and bleach which is also dumped into the LDP.
3. Each camper should bring a cup in their wash kit. Instruct campers never to brush teeth at a water tap. First, it will make the area very muddy, and secondly, the toothpaste will attract insects.

HAND-WASHING



1. Punch a hole near the bottom of a 4-L jug. Plug it with a golf tee or cork. Label the jug: "For Hand-washing Only"
2. Fill the jug with water and Dettol or bleach.
3. Hang the jug from a tree, or sit it on a large rock or stump outside the toilet.
4. To use, take the plug out and when done, put the plug back in the hole. Flick hands to air dry.
5. The Sanitation Patrol should check that the jug is refilled on a regular basis.

OTHER RESOURCES

1. How to Survive in the Woods <http://www.wikihow.com/Survive-in-the-Woods>
2. Water treatment equipment <http://www.mec.ca/shop/camping-water-treatment/50130+50467/>