



Living Comfortably in the Outdoors

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

Camping is also the foundation of many other Scouting activities. Scouts camp for fun, but they also camp so they can be closer to great spots for fishing, rock climbing, geocaching, hiking, and a host of other activities. Comfort in the outdoors means finding a balance between skills and equipment. The more you know, the less equipment you need. The goal is not to be like a Navy SEAL but to have good outdoor skills so you feel more comfortable and confident while living outdoors.

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

Objectives

This month’s activities should:

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

RELATED ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS

- Tenderfoot requirements 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3b, and 3c
- Second Class requirements 1a, 1c, 2a, and 2d
- First Class requirements 1a and 3d
- Camping merit badge
- Firem’n Chit



Leadership Planning

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

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

PARENTS CAN HELP WITH THE CAMPING PROGRAM FEATURE BY:

1. Providing transportation for the campout
2. Helping with purchasing food before the campout
3. Making sure every Scout has appropriate equipment
4. Maintaining current Youth Protection certification, which is required of all adults providing transportation for or participating in outings

CAMPING INFORMATION

Outdoor Ethics

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

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

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

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

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



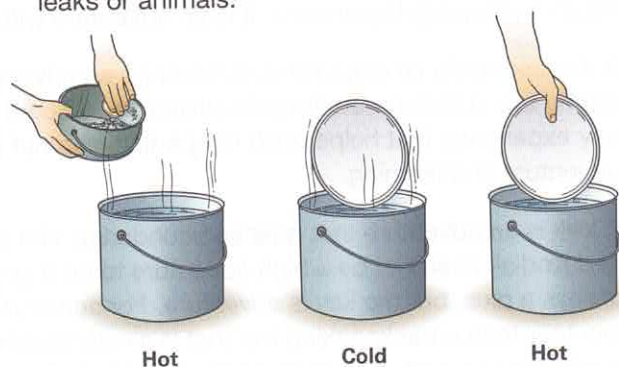


Three-Bin Dishwashing

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

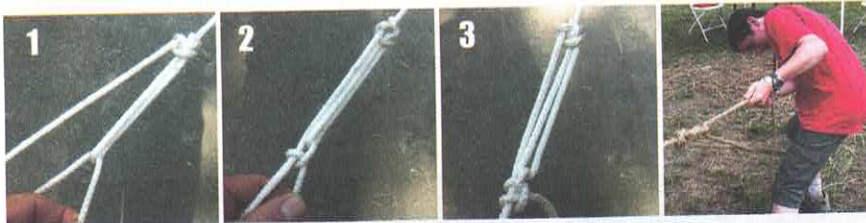
Before washing, make sure you use a rubber spatula to scrape excess food into a trash bag. Immerse and wash each dish in the first bin, rinse in the second bin, sanitize with a dip in the the third bin, then leave dishes to air dry. A rack or mesh hang bag works well. Save pots for the end as they are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

To dispose of the bins of dishwater, pour the wash bin water and rinse water through a strainer and into a bucket. The water can then be dumped in a wastewater drain, sump hole, or broadcast over a large area. Finally, pour the sanitizer into the rinse bin, then into the wash bin, then into the bucket, and properly dispose of it. When this process is complete, all three bins and the bucket will have been cleaned and sanitized. Shake the food particles from the strainer into a trash bag, and properly dispose of or pack out the trash bag. Do not carry trash bags inside packs due to the risk of leaks or animals.

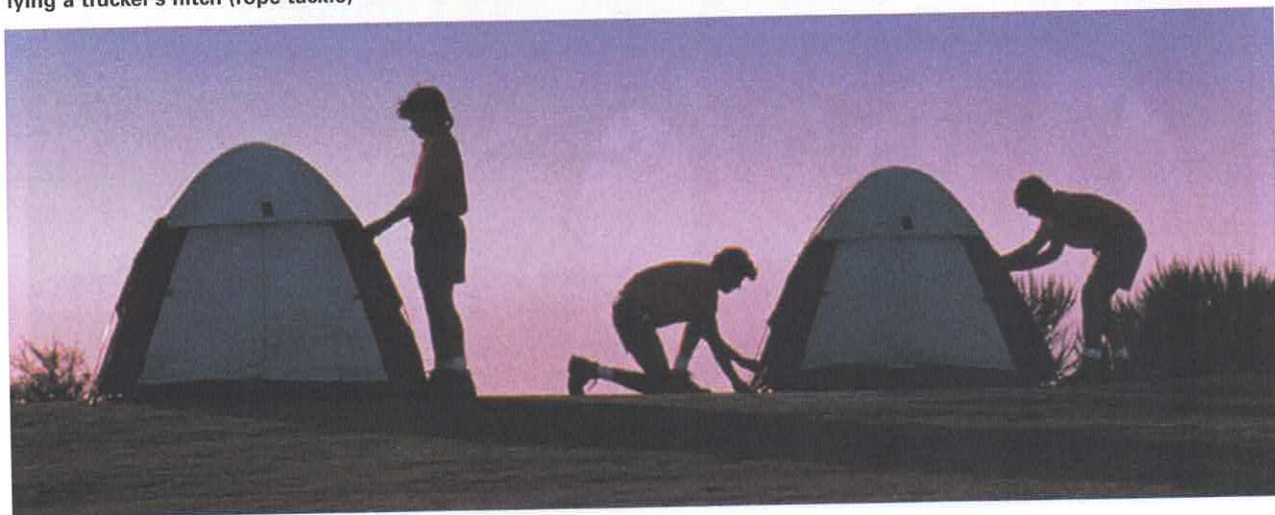


The Trucker's Hitch

The trucker's hitch is a particularly valuable knot for securing load-bearing lines. This knot provides a mechanical advantage and works like a pulley system—but without the pulleys. This knot is very useful in securing loads on a rack or for tightening a ridge line. Additionally, it has numerous uses in pioneering.



Tying a trucker's hitch (rope tackle)





THE KODIAK CHALLENGE

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

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

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

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

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

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





CAMPING GAMES

Sloppy Camp

Equipment: A simple camp setup (dining fly, tent, and fireplace) with many things wrong — tent flaps open, boots left outside tent, ax on the ground, bow saw unsheathed, glass jar in the fireplace, no fire buckets, firewood unsorted and uncovered, trash on the ground, dirty pot on camp table, poorly set tent pegs, guylines at wrong angles, wrong knots on guylines, etc.

How to play: The patrols study the camp for 5 minutes without talking. The Scouts are permitted to touch what they see but must replace objects exactly as they found them. Each patrol then huddles to come up with a list of things that are wrong.

Scoring: The patrol with the best list of “incorrect” items wins.

String Burning Race

Equipment: For each patrol, two 2-foot sticks, two 3-foot lengths of binder twine, two matches

How to play: Before the race, each patrol pushes the two sticks into the ground, 24 inches apart. They tie two lengths of twine between the sticks, one 12 inches off the ground and the other 18 inches off the ground. Each patrol gathers native tinder and firewood. On signal, two representatives from each patrol build a fire lay (not higher than the lower string) and light it. After being lit, the fire must not be touched, nor can more wood be added.

Note: Patrols are limited to using only one “fist-sized” amount of tinder in their fire lay.

Scoring: The team whose fire burns through the top string first wins.



Dining Fly Race

Equipment: For each patrol, one tarp with grommets and ridge line attached, four 15-foot guylines, four Scout staves, four 6-foot lashing ropes, six stakes, one mallet

How to play: Patrols assemble with their materials in an area large enough to accommodate the extended guylines and ridge line. On signal, with round lashings, they lash together the four Scout staves into two upright poles, attach the ridge line to the top of each upright with clove hitches, attach a guyline to the corner grommets with two half-hitches or a bowline, extend the guylines out 45 degrees, and tie the ends to stakes with taut-line hitches, doing the same with the two ends of the ridge line. They then stand up their fly and adjust the tension of the ropes. When the dining fly is properly erected, all patrol members stand underneath.

Scoring: The first patrol to finish wins. Add points for excellent teamwork and deduct points for incorrectly tied knots.

Taut-line Hitch Race

Equipment: For each patrol member, 15-foot 3/16- to 1/4-inch nylon guyline

Preparation: Set out two parallel rows of chairs so the legs of one row are 10 feet away from the other.

How to play: On signal, each patrol member ties one end of each guyline around the leg of a chair in one row with two half-hitches and the other end of the line to a leg of a chair in the other row with a taut-line hitch.

Scoring: The first patrol to give a yell, with all hitches tied correctly, wins.

Note: A selection of additional camping skill activities can be found in the Activities section of www.programresources.org under Scout Skill Challenge Videos.



E.D.G.E. Ideas

- Explain* how it is done—Tell them.
- Demonstrate* the steps—Show them.
- Guide* learners as they practice—Watch them do it.
- Enable* them to succeed on their own—Have them practice/teach it.

EXPLAIN

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

DEMONSTRATE

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

GUIDE

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

ENABLE

- Have Scouts teach camping skills to Webelos Scouts.
- Have Scouts clean and season the unit's Dutch ovens.
- Make fire starters for camping.
- Encourage Scouts to make posters illustrating outdoor ethics principles.

MAIN EVENT SUMMARIES

● ESSENTIAL

Overnight Activity

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

■ CHALLENGING

Overnight Activity

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

◆ ADVANCED

Five to Six Days

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



CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Campsites



Week 1 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Prepare several decks of index cards listing various items of camping gear, one item per card. Have small groups sort the cards in order of importance, setting aside items that shouldn't be taken camping.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth leaders lead a discussion using a diagram of model campsites as a point of reference. Youth leaders show how to set up a dining fly. 		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to tie two half-hitches and a taut-line hitch. Learn how to tie a clove hitch over an open-ended vertical pole. 		7:20 p.m.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the above skills. Learn how to join two poles with two round lashings. 		
	Using the above skills, erect a dining fly as quickly and efficiently as possible.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss plans for the main event. Review what personal and group equipment will be needed. 		7:55 p.m.
Game 15 minutes	Play Sloppy Camp, Taut-line Hitch Race, or Dining Fly Race (described earlier).		8:10 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.



CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Using Durable Surfaces/Tents



Week 2 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Set up a display of several types of tents. As Scouts arrive, discuss the different tents and the best use of each.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Review the second principle of Leave No Trace (travel and camp on durable surfaces). Discuss how this principle applies to both frontcountry and backcountry activities. Point out any special local considerations, such as wetlands, in an area where you like to camp.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the factors in selecting a good campsite. • Practice setting up tents. (For an extra challenge, set up tents while blindfolded.) 		7:20 p.m.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how to maintain and repair tents, both in the field and back home. • Brainstorm what tools and repair supplies you should take camping (example: duct tape wrapped around a fuel bottle for use in patching tents and repairing tent poles). 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the above skills. • Discuss alternative and emergency shelters and what supplies you should carry to make them easier to construct. 		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a cooking menu. • Begin meal planning and create a duty roster for the main event. 		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Make a selection from the General Outdoor Skill Activities list at www.programresources.org .		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.



CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Proper Sanitation and Dishwashing



Week 3 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Look through your group camping gear for dirty equipment (especially pots and utensils). Display it as Scouts arrive so they see how the unit needs to work on cleanliness and sanitation.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 15 minutes	Discuss how to dispose of waste properly, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of "pack it in/pack it out" • The dos and don'ts of human waste • Why you shouldn't leave things behind 		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	Using a spoon, eat something out of a bowl that will require washing. As a group, set up a three-bin washing system and wash the bowls and spoons.		7:25 p.m.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the three-bin washing system. • Using troop supplies, lash together a hand-washing station. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using troop supplies, lash together a hand-washing station. • Using troop supplies, lash together a self-standing garbage bag holder. 		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group fills out a duty roster for upcoming campout. • Identify special equipment needed for additional activities. 		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Make a selection from the General Outdoor Skill Activities at www.programresources.org .		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.



CAMPING

Meeting Plan: Fire and Stoves



Week 4 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Prepare a Dutch oven dessert or other camping treat and serve as Scouts arrive.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Discuss how to minimize campfire impacts.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 35 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to use a camp stove. Learn the basics of fire building, including tinder, kindling, and fuel. 		7:20 p.m.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the above skills. Learn how to use a backpacking stove. Discuss or make fire starters you can take camping (examples: dryer lint, paraffin-soaked cardboard, cotton balls dipped in petroleum jelly). 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the above skills. Discuss or practice starting a fire without matches. Learn to cook without using utensils. 		
Breakout Groups 20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize plans for the main event. Plan the group's portion of the evening program (song, skit, or story). 		7:55 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play String Burning Race (described earlier) or Water Boiling Race (see www.programresources.org).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.



CAMPING

Main Event: Overnight Car Camp



Date _____

Logistics
 Location: _____

 Departure time: _____
 Return time: _____
 Duration of activity: Overnight
 Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____
 Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____
 Transportation: Group _____ Self _____

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

Equipment List

- Camping gear (individual and group)
- Backpacks, canoes, or bicycles to get the group to and from the campsite (optional)
- Food
- Water
- Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.)

Activity

- Choose your campsite and event location.
- Plan camping duty roster and meal plan.
- Develop a schedule that allows plenty of time for setting up camp the right way, including establishing defined sleeping, social, and cooking areas.
- Practice camping skills Scouts need to work on (fire building, cooking, knots, etc.).
- Participate in other activities as desired (hiking, boating, mountain biking, etc.).
- On departure, be sure you are leaving no trace of your presence.

Safety

- Normal camping safety guidelines apply. Use the buddy system; cellphones are a good idea as appropriate. Have a first-aid kit handy.
- Two-deep adult leadership is required for all activities.

Notes

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



CAMPING

Main Event: Camping in the Teens



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Overnight or weekend

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____

Challenging (Tier II)

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

Equipment List

- Camping gear (individual and group) based on early Scout manuals
- Food
- Water
- Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.)

Activity

- Obtain a reprint of Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* or the first *Handbook for Boys*. (Do an internet search for PDF versions.) Research early camping methods and activities.
- Have Scouts create their own camping gear and come up with group gear similar to that used in Scouting's early days.
- Practice camping skills Scouts need to work on (fire building, cooking, knots, etc.).
- Create a weekend program that includes playing some of the games described in early handbooks.
- Plan menus based on cooking from scratch over fires instead of using stoves and backpacking-style food.

Safety

- Normal camping safety guidelines apply. Use the buddy system, and have a first-aid kit. Place a waypoint at camp so you can find your way back. Cellphones are a good idea as appropriate.
- Two-deep adult leadership is required for all activities.

Notes

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



CAMPING

Main Event: Kodiak Challenge



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Five to six days

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____



Advanced (Tier III)

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

Equipment List

- Camping gear (individual and group)
- Food
- Water
- Scout Basic Essentials (Review the list and take what you need.)
- Trek-specific gear

Activity

- Obtain and study *The Kodiak Challenge* No. 511-014.
- Get permission from your council training committee to conduct a Kodiak trek.
- Plan and conduct the trek as described in *The Kodiak Challenge*.

Safety

- Normal camping safety guidelines apply. Use the buddy system, and have a first-aid kit handy. Cellphones are a good idea as appropriate.
- Two-deep adult leadership is required for all activities.

Notes



RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Books

Backpacking, Camping, First Aid, Hiking, Pioneering, and Sustainability merit badge pamphlets

Fieldbook

Knots and How to Tie Them

Scouts BSA Handbook for Boys

Scouts BSA Handbook for Girls

Websites

Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics

Website: <http://lnt.org>

Tread Lightly!

Website: www.treadlightly.org

Related Program Features

Backpacking, First Aid, Geocaching, Hiking, Orienteering, Outdoor Ethics, Sustainability, Winter Camping

Photo and Illustration Credits

Pages 1-1 (*compass*, BSA/Roy Jansen; *GPS receiver*, BSA/Daniel Giles; *flat sleeping bag*, Omega Studios; *all others*, BSA file), 1-2 (BSA file), 1-3 (*all illustrations*, BSA/John McDearmon; *trucker's hitch*, Larry Green Photography; *campsite*, BSA/Christian Michaels), 1-4 (BSA/Randy Piland), and 1-5 (BSA file)

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