

Troop 10 - Gear Night 2010

Sleeping Bags

- We recommend a synthetic (not goose down) mummy bag. Goose down is warmer and lighter, but much more expensive and loses its insulating value when wet.
- Get a bag rated 0 degrees or lower. Each year we camp in single-digit weather or colder.
- They come regular (up to 5'10") or long (up to 6'4") these should last all through scouts, so buy for future height.
- Prices range from \$70-\$150+. Usually the more expensive bags last longer and perform to their rating. Look at the fill weight to compare bags.
- IMPORTANT: Sleeping bags should not be stored in a stuff sack at home! Be sure to remove your bag from the stuff sack and hang it over a hanger or keep in a larger loose storage sack. This will keep the filling loose, and provide maximum insulation value for years to come.
- How to stay warmer in ANY sleeping bag:
 - Change into dry clothes before bed, especially clothes touching your body: socks, tshirts, etc.
 - Wear a ski hat and/or hoodie sweatshirt to bed
 - Put on an extra layer (sweatshirt or fleece)
 - Use a fleece sleeping bag liner
- Bags to Check Out:
 - Cabela's Diamond Peak Altitude, 0°, \$70
 - Cabela's 3D Bag 0°, \$110
 - Kelty Mistral 0°, \$60, Campmor
 - Slumberjack Latitude -20°, \$60, Campmor
 - Cabela's Alaskan Guide 0° (down), \$229

Backpacks

- We recommend the Kelty Trekker external frame pack or something similar because it adjusts better to a growing boy.
- Internal frame packs do not adjust as well, cost more, weigh more, and are much harder for a boy to pack. Wait until they are full grown and love backpacking before you invest in one of these
- Price range \$90 - \$125
- We generally only do one backpack trip a year (January), plus Philmont.
- Check Craigslist/eBay for used packs

Sleeping Pads

- Because of all the winter camping we recommend a full length pad (72").
- Less expensive pads are closed cell foam that either roll up or fold up like an accordion.
- More expensive pads are called "self-inflating" and the predominant manufacturer is "Thermarest", but Cabelas, EMS, REI, etc. all sell quality store brands as well.
- Prices range from \$20 (closed cell foam) to \$80 (ultralightweight self inflating).

- The thicker the pad, the more insulation and comfort.
- If you invest in a self inflating pad we recommend a Prolite Plus, regular length (72"x20"x1.5") because it is light rolls up very small for backpacking. The thicker pads, although more comfortable, are much bigger and heavier and not good for backpacking. For car camping trips, consider bringing an inexpensive second pad for additional insulation.

Boots and Socks

- Sneakers should only be worn on warm weather trips with NO CHANCE of rain.
- For most trips, waterproof, breathable hiking boots are best. Look for Gore-Tex or something similar for waterproofing.
- For winter camping, you may prefer a pair of taller, insulated boots. Walmart has decent winter boots with rubber bottoms and synthetic uppers for \$30-\$40.
- Do not wear cotton socks for scout trips. Look for socks made of merino wool and acrylic/nylon. They will keep you warm and wick moisture away from your feet. You should have at least three pairs of good socks on camping trips. Smartwool is a good brand.

Layers, Layers, Layers

- This is the most important part of enjoying winter camping – dressing in layers.
- Start with a self-wicking undershirt (Coolmax or Underarmour)
- Next is a turtleneck or sweatshirt
- Next is your fleece
- Next is some kind of shell/coat that is windproof and at least water repellent (preferably waterproof).
- These four layers will keep you warm down to 10 degrees and allow you to remove clothing once you start moving so you do not overheat.

Rain Wear

- Two words: waterproof and breathable.

Tents

- Scouts can use troop tents.
- For dads, we recommend a 2-3 person tent with aluminum poles and full coverage rain fly.
- There isn't room to set up larger tents on many of our trips.

Stocking Stuffers

- Elkskin mittens with Thinsulate insulation – Cabelas
- Fleece sleeping bag liner - inexpensive and provide extra warmth on cold nights – Walmart or Dicks
- LED headlamps work well for backpacking and regular camping - the LED models go forever on a battery – about \$25
- Nalgene bottles are 1 liter unbreakable water bottles that we use for many things (Group water, personal water, hot water bottles on cold nights) 2 or 3 are plenty – about \$10 each
- Swiss army knife