T58 New Scout Tip: What & How to Pack for Backpacking

April 2021

First off, a quick review of the Scout Motto: Be Prepared. It means just that. It does not mean bring everything you can think of and it does not mean hope your friend is prepared. There are many packing lists out there to consult, but below is a **basic** place to start.

Pack weight and fit are the key facets when it comes to backpacking. Youth typically grow rapidly during their years in scouting, so getting a pack that has room for vertical growth is important. While internal frame packs are more prevalent now, external frame packs are a valid choice and may offer a better fit. REI is a great resource, and they rent packs (and othergear) which may be a great option when getting started.

Try not to overpack, as that just adds unnecessary weight. Light/ultralight weight tents are expensive, but there are really good options in the 3–4 pound range. Do not pack the standard car camping 4-person tent…they are way too heavy to carry. Regarding clothing, you may have heard the phrase "**cotton kills.**" When cotton gets wet (from rain or perspiration) it holds moisture, conducts heat away from the body, and can cause chaffing. Stick to naturally wicking materials (e.g. merino wool) or synthetics (e.g. polyester) and do not over pack. An extra pair of socks should be the only "extra".

Do not feel like you need to go out and spend $2,000+ to get the 'best' and lightest backpackinggear. Less expensive gear works just as well and packing the right gear vs. too much gear will solve many pack weight issues. Finally, **ASK ANY QUESTIONS** of others as backpacking can seem overwhelming but it is a really fun and unique way to experience nature.

Clothing	<60° Temp Clothing	Other Gear
O Hiking Boots (Water Proof)	O Long Underwear Set	O Pack
O 2 Pairs of Wool Socks	O Lightweight Fleece Jacket	O Nalgene Water Bottle
O 1or 2 Pair Sock Liners	O Heavy Fleece or Down Jacket	O Mess Kit (Including Utensils)
O 1 Pair Hiking Shorts/Pants	O Fleece Pants	O Headlamp & Flashlight
O Rain pants	O Wool or Fleece Cap	O Pocket Knife (w/ Totin' Chip)
O 2 Pair Synthetic Underwear	O Wool or Synthetic Gloves	O Handbook (in Ziploc/Case)
O Class B Shirt		O Camp Chair/Sitting Pad
O 1 Wicking T-Shirts	Sleeping Gear	O Camp Shoes
O Rain Jacket w/Hood	O Sleeping Bag (+20°)	O Toothbrush & Toothpaste
O Scout Uniform Cap	O Waterproof Stuff Bag	O Other Toiletries (no deodorant)
	O Sleeping Pad	O Medicine & Instructions
	O Tent (w/ Footprint/Ground Cloth)	O Poop Kit (trowel, TP, hand sanitizer)