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Boy Scout 10 Essentials

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Prepared. For Life. It's more than a motto for Scouting; it's a way to plan and execute each outing, even if it's just a Saturday morning hike. In the woods, the items here (stowed in a daypack) can keep you comfortable, warm, hydrated, safe and, most of all, prepared to face what nature puts in your path — whether you asked for it or not.

This list is based upon the Scout Basic Essentials included in the *Boy Scout Handbook* and *Fieldbook* with a few twists.



A POCKET KNIFE

A pocket knife is the all-purpose tool of the outdoors. Use it to cut cord, trim a bandage, slice cheese, whittle a tent stake, open a can, tighten a camp stove screw, and take care of hundreds

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of other tasks. Choose a quality knife that includes one or two sharp blades, a can opener, and a screwdriver. Invest in a good knife now, and it will serve you well through years of adventures. (Shown: [Swiss Army Serrated Spartan](#), \$31.)



FIRST AID KIT

Having basic first-aid items on hand will allow you to treat minor injuries and to provide initial care if more serious emergencies arise. Zippered into a self-sealing plastic bag, a personal first-aid kit has what you need to treat a blister, clean a wound and bandage a cut. (Shown: [Adventure Medical Kit's Ultralight & Watertight .9](#), \$36.)



EXTRA CLOTHING

Weather in some backcountry can change — sometimes with startling swiftness. Have the clothing you need to deal with the extremes of heat, cold and storms. For summer campouts close to home, you can probably find most of the clothing you need in your closet. Using a layering system allows you to stay comfortable by adding or removing clothes as the weather changes. Falling temperatures and the possibilities of rain or snow require more attention to what you wear and the additional clothing you carry.

RAIN GEAR

Be prepared to face the elements with rain protection in the form of a shell jacket, pants and more. (Shown: [Marmot PreCip](#), \$90.)



WATER STORAGE

How much water you'll need depends upon what you will be doing and whether you can replenish your supply along the way. Hot and humid conditions increase your thirst, but you need to drink plenty of fluids in cold, dry weather, too. An inexpensive option is to simply rinse plastic water or soda bottles and fill them with drinking water. Or, you can choose a wide-mouthed plastic bottle that's easy to fill and clean. Other options include a hydration pack or collapsible water jug. (Shown: [Platypus Platy Bottle](#), \$12.95.)



FLASHLIGHT OR HEADLAMP

You might intend to be home before nightfall, but things don't always go as planned. A flashlight will illuminate a site as you set up camp in the dark or light up a trail as you find your way after the sun has gone down. Carry spare batteries, as well. A handheld flashlight

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can be heavy and sometimes awkward to use, but they are fine for trips not limited by the amount of weight you can carry. A compact headlamp powered by AA or AAA batteries, with an elastic band that fits around your head, will free your hands for hiking when visibility is limited, for dealing with emergencies after dark and for reading in a tent. (Shown: [Princeton Tec Fuel](#), \$30.)

TRAIL FOOD

You will be very happy to have an emergency supply of trail food if a trip in the field lasts longer than planned or if your provisions run out sooner than you expected. Rely on foods that are compact, high in energy and unlikely to spoil — a small bag of granola, for example, and perhaps an energy bar or two.



MATCHES AND FIRE STARTERS

Plan your clothing, shelter and meals well enough that you won't need a campfire. But be prepared to build one in the event of an emergency. Carry several different kinds of fire sources so if one fails, you'll have a backup. Matches, butane lighters, tinder aids, traditional fire starters are all good examples. (Shown: [REI Co-op Stormproof Matches](#), \$6.50.)



SUN PROTECTION

http://www.rei.com/learn/center/faq/faq.html Design: <a href="http://

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Sunburn is among the most common injuries suffered by people who enjoy being outdoors. Repeated sunburns can cause long-term skin damage and the potential for skin cancer. While people with fair skin are the most at risk, everyone should be aware of the dangers of too much sun and should take steps to protect against it. Use sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15. Wear a broad-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt and long pants to provide more complete protection. Sunglasses are also a good choice. (Shown: [OR Drifter Cap](#) offers Gore-Tex and a draw-cord cinch, \$34.)



MAP AND COMPASS

Staying found is an important responsibility for anyone traveling outdoors. Learning to navigate on trails, over water and across open country can bring a great sense of enjoyment and confidence. Carry a map of the area you are exploring, along with a simple compass to help make your way through unfamiliar terrain. Even when they aren't essential for route-finding, practicing with navigational tools can be fun. Practicing will help prepare you for times when you might need to rely on these tools. (Shown: [Silva Polaris 177](#), \$18.)

OA Dog Policy

Dogs are only allowed on hikes where the event host has specified that it is okay, mainly for liability reasons. The exception to this rule are hikes sponsored by the State Park system. These hikes follow their policy: Pets of most sorts (excluding farm animals) are allowed on Ranger led hikes, as long as they are on leashes or contained (such as parrots). Please keep in mind that though leashed, dogs and cats and parrots may not behave very well in one group. Please use good judgement when considering bringing a pet, and bear in mind that pets on a hike lessen the chance that we will see wildlife.

What Should I Wear/Bring?

Please bring at least two bottles of water, more if you are bringing a pet. Jeans are terrible to hike in. The seams end up chafing after about the first mile. Sweatpants or exercise pants are preferable. Please wear sneakers or hiking shoes (or boots) and socks. Sandals and flip flops are not allowed.

It is always ideal to carry a small backpack with snacks. In the winter, it is important to dress in layers so you can strip off a layers as needed. You will heat up during the hike and cool down **RAPIDLY** after you have finished hiking.

If you have other questions that have not been answered here, feel free to reach out to the [Leadership Team](#).