

Notes on Camping & Hiking Equipment.

Boots

Light rubber soled walking boots or sturdy shoes suitable for lots of walking in different terrains. Must be durable, good condition, **well broken in**. NOT elastic sided boots. Recommend boots with ankle support. Don't purchase an expensive pair of hike boots unless they will get a lot of use – sturdy runners will suffice.

Raincoat and Waterproof Overpants

Waterproof jacket with hood. NOT lined. Lightweight but durable.
See detailed notes below

Jumper - Light to Medium weight. Wool or Polar Fleece. NOT COTTON.

Long Pants

Loose fitting, comfortable, lightweight eg. Cargo, ex-Army or King Gee pants. Recommend quick dry material. **NOT** jeans.

T-shirts

Must have sleeves – no spaghetti string tank tops.

Thermal top and pants

MUST be wool, chlorofibre or polypropylene. **NOT COTTON**.

Socks

Light to medium weight wool or wool/nylon mix.

Beanie and Gloves

Wool or polar fleece. **NOT COTTON**.

Hat

Wide brim hat eg. Cricketer's hat or surf hat, for sun protection.

Torch

We prefer head torches they are inexpensive, bring 2 or bring spare batteries.

Sleeping Mats and Stretches

A cheap foam mat is all that is needed to sleep on. If you would like to spend more money then there are a variety of self-inflating mattresses you can purchase (ie. Thermarest) – if you are purchasing one for hiking then only purchase a thin and possibly short (3/4 length) one.

Stretches are not recommended (for camp) as they take up too much room in the tent– however for Cuborees and Jamborees a group decision is usually made on the suitability of stretches. Note that if your child has to travel on a bus with a Cuboree/Jamboree issued bag the stretch will have to fit inside the bag. Speak to a leader if you wish to purchase a stretch.

Sleeping Bags

Please do not purchase a cheap sleeping bag and expect your child to be warm on a camp/hike in winter. Camping/hiking in winter will require a down filled sleeping bag (600 fill weight) will ensure your child will not be cold. These are an expensive item (around \$300)– so watch out for sales – I have bought them for half price at Anaconda. If your child is going to hike then you will need to balance warmth with weight and size of the bag – be aware of very small sleeping bags that say they are rated below zero if they are not horrendously expensive (around \$800) they will not be warm enough. Basically the rating system is not standardized and doesn't really mean much – it is the fill weight of the bag that you will want to compare. As a guide I usually take the rating that is on a bag and add 6-7 degree ie. A bag that is rated at zero will be good for about 6-7 degrees. If you are hiking and camping in winter with scouts we will encounter zero degrees.

You will also encounter synthetic fill bags – there are pros and cons for both down and synthetic bags – I could write pages on them – but basically synthetic are cheaper but not as warm but if they get wet they are better

than down (ie they stay warm). Any specialist camping store will be able to advise you about bags – or feel free to talk to a leader we love to talk about gear.

What should I NOT bring?

Mobile phones, radios, walkman/discmans, MP3 players, Ipods, games, excessive lollies, cosmetics, excessive toiletries.

Why Woollen Jumpers?

Wool is a good fabric for staying warm in wet/cold conditions. It naturally absorbs very little moisture, so continues to feel warm and continues to insulate effectively even if it is wet. Check the label to be sure the garment is at least 70% wool. Two light-to-medium weight woollen jumpers are more versatile than onethick one. (Youth can 'layer' clothing and more effectively regulate body temperature) Synthetic fabrics such as Polypropylene or Chlorofibre (as used in long 'thermal' underwear and polar fleece) are a suitable (but usually more expensive) replacement for wool.

Cotton pullovers are TOTALLY UNSUITABLE as a fabric to keep you warm in the bush.

DO NOT BRING cotton 'sweatshirts', football jumpers, tracksuit tops, etc.

Why 'Chlorofibre', 'Polypropylene' or Woollen Thermals?

It is cheaper to purchase cotton long johns or spencers, they look the same and you might think they are a suitable alternative to Chlorofibre, Polypropylene or Wool thermals. However, Cotton is TOTALLY UNSUITABLE as a fabric to keep you warm in the bush, particularly as a thermal layer. Cotton draws and holds moisture, rather than wicking or repelling it. Cotton materials get wet, stay wet and take a very long time to dry. If worn when wet (even from perspiration) they will draw warmth away from the body. DO NOT bring cotton long johns or spencers.

Why a 'Waterproof' Jacket?

This is an essential item of great importance since Scouts do not stop activities when it rains – we put a waterproof coat on and get on with it. An effective waterproof jacket will provide protection from cold, wet and wind. It must:

- Have an effective hood that protects head, neck and face from rain and wind
- Be ABSOLUTELY 100% waterproof
- Reach at least half way down your thighs
- Durable and preferably breathable, if wearing during hikes

What jackets are NOT SUITABLE?

- Ski parkas, cotton/material lined or quilted jackets (THEY ARE NOT WATERPROOF)
- Plastic jackets, capes, ponchos or other flimsy raincoats (THEY TEAR ON UNDERGROWTH)
- "Showerproof" spray jackets (THEY ARE NOT WATERPROOF AND MAY BE TOO SHORT)

How can I check whether my jacket is waterproof?

Try sucking air through the jacket material. Generally, if air can get through, so can water. Also check the seams to see if they have been taped or heat sealed. If they are, it is usually an indication that the jacket material is waterproof. Manufacturers do not usually bother waterproofing seams if the rest of the jacket is not waterproof. "Gortex" and similar waterproof fabrics are excellent, but can be expensive. These materials do not allow water liquid (rain) to penetrate, but still allow water vapour to pass through. This allows perspiration inside to escape so inner clothing does not become damp, while water on the outside cannot enter. A suitable alternative that meets the essential criteria listed above can usually be found – eg rainbird jacket and pants (although they do not breathe they are ok for this age group of kids)

What should I bring my clothes in?

PACK all items in a soft lightweight bag with carry straps eg. Sports bag, duffle bag. Hike pack if Hiking – these are available at the scout hall. NO suitcases.