

4th Year Backpacking Trip



The Basics:

July 12th to 13th 2016

Depart Duthie Hill Building at 8 am

Destination: Rampart Lake

<http://www.wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/rampart-ridge-1>

The goal is to learn how to experience the outdoors unencumbered by the crutch of modern life. You'll learn and use lightweight backpacking techniques to keep your load minimal and your experiences maximal.

Also, you'll learn an easy system of cooking that requires minimal weight, leaves no dishes to wash and keeps you fueled up for hiking miles.

The Requirements:

- Backpack with minimal gear for an overnight.
- Follow the gear list explicitly and you'll be ready.
- Prepared freezer bag meals.
- Leave room in pack for troop gear (tent, water filter, stove, pots)

Pack Check:

- Held **July 9th @ 5 pm**
- Duthie Hill Chapel
- Bring all gear packed and ready to go.

There will be prizes for the lightest pack!

Lightweight Backpacking Checklist

This list is designed to provide exactly the things your scout will need and still keep their pack light enough to enjoy themselves. Consider that many packs that scouts are taking into the hills weight up to ½ their body weight and you can see the need to lighten their load. If they cart 40 lbs. of weight, odds are they will learn to see backpacking as backbreaking work instead of fun.

Aim to have 10-15 lbs. of gear tops before food/water.

Happily, going lightweight is generally much cheaper than industrial backpacking gear, so save your hard earned cash for the sleeping bag (where cost means something).

Just because a manufacturer markets it lightweight, does not mean it is (generally it's the opposite). Don't be sucked into hype or the hair-brained ideas of an REI guy wanting to sell you a bunch of stuff you don't need.

Troop gear and food will be added to this list. Rule of thumb – don't bring it unless you **really** need it.

Gear

- Backpack (GoLite Jam) *
- Sleeping pad (Closed Cell Foam) *
- Sleeping bag (32 degree)
- 2 1L Empty soda bottles for water *
- LED headlamp/small flashlight

Cooking

- Plastic Cup
- Plastic Fork/Spoon or Spork *

Clothes *

No cotton – quick-dry nylon/poly only

- Short Sleeve Shirt
- Pants - consider zip off models
- Wool hiking socks
- Trail Runners
- Hat
- Poncho/Rainwear

Cold Weather Gear

- Long Sleeve T Shirt
- Gloves
- Fleece/Jacket
- Stocking Cap

Miscellaneous Items

- Small Compass
- Knife (2" blade folding)
- 1 Garbage Bag
- 2 Ziploc Bags (freezer kind)
- Ditty bags for food/loose gear
- Toilet Paper in Ziploc (Blue shop towels better, cut into squares)

Safety Kit

- Small bottle of Purell
- Small Sunscreen
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Lip Balm
- Signal Mirror
- Whistle on a Lanyard
- Mini Lighter or waterproof matches
- Tweezers
- Parachute cord (50 ft)
- Paper and small pencil
- Small camp soap (Dr. Bronners)
- Fire-Starters

Here are some recommendations for parents to make sure they outfit their kids wisely:

1. **Pack** - I recommend a GoLite Jam2 or similar lightweight pack – it should weight 1.5 lbs. or less. Larger daypacks work fine and limit what they can carry – 2500 CI is more than enough. Also consider they won't need an industrial pack frame if they don't carry so much weight. Some backpacks weight up to 6 lbs. with *nothing* in them. No, that pack in the attic with an aluminum frame isn't going to cut it.
2. **Sleeping Bag** – this is where you spend the money. Get a 25-32 degree down bag. Its going to cost a bit, but you'll save at least that not buying all the other stuff REI wants to sell you. Despite what you hear, down is hard to get wet and compresses much better than synthetic. Buy once.
3. **Sleeping Pad** – no need for an expensive Thermarest or inflatable pad, just get a closed cell foam pad. Cheap and indestructible. Consider cutting it down to their size (or even torso sized). They are young, they don't need the padding.
4. **Water Bottles** – Camelback-style bladders are fine but heavy. Good old 1 Liter soda bottles work great, and weight a fraction of what expensive Nalgene are heavy and overbuilt – consider that they weigh 6x as much for no gain.
5. **Cooking Gear** – don't bring anything other than a simple pot, a plastic cup and a spoon/fork/spork. Taco Bell/Dairy Queen both have a great long-handled plastic spoon.
6. Trial runners/running shoes are fine for support if they don't carry a lot of weight. Boots are overkill – they weigh a lot, have to break in and dry slowly. Do not send your kid in ill fittin boots that will give them blisters.
7. **Clothing** – apart from what they wear, throw in an extra T-shirt (appropriate for weather) and a pair of lightweight shorts, plus an extra pair of socks and you're good for all but week-long trips. Seriously, no need for multiple changes of clothes. And especially forgo the jeans and sweat pants as they never dry. Poly stuff only.
8. **Footwear** – super important. Do not send them in big boots from the 70's you found in the closet. A nice pair of trail or running shoes is more than enough if you're not carrying a lot of weight. Cheap and they can use them everyday after. Blisters seriously ruin a trip.
9. **Rain gear** - Outside the cold seasons, a cheap plastic poncho works great for rainwear – especially something that rarely gets used in the summer.
10. **Packaging** – You must cut down on packaging and non-essentials. Do they need a Costco-sized bottle of sunscreen/insect repellent/Purell sanitizer etc? You can get small bottles at REI to repackage these items to carry what they'll need. Skip toothpaste and deodorant, this isn't a fashion show or a lab environment. You'll get dirty, deal with it.
11. It goes without saying that MP3 players, iPhones and other such electronic gadgets are not necessary or needed for a wilderness experience. We'll take them away if we see them. Bring phones for the rides in/out but they'll be left in the truck.

Seriously, the more you prune from their pack, the better they will feel at the end of the day and the more they will enjoy the experience. Our kids average 10 lbs. of extra gear they just don't need, so be on hand to help guide them as they pack up for that upcoming trip.

Please note that they'll be asked to bring extra troop gear (pots, water filters, stoves/canisters and tents) so make sure they have some room for that at the trail head.



Freezer Bag Cooking

FBC is a simple system of prepacking food in quart freezer bags, requiring only boiling water and a small, insulated cozy to minimize fuel usage.

FBC was developed by long distance hikers who value lightweight, minimal camp chores, better nutrition and little garbage.

How does it work?

When getting ready to “cook” your meal, bring your water to a boil. Pour the water into your cup to measure, then add it to your freezer bag.

Carefully mix it up with a spoon or by massaging it. After you have mixed it well, zip up the bag tightly and insert in your cozy. Then let sit for 5 to 15 minutes (the recipe and altitude will determine how long), make yourself a drink and wait for your meal. Once ready, stir well and eat.

Here is the best part - when you’re done, just roll up the Ziploc bag and seal it. Done. No dishes. And no messy garbage like the expensive, commercial backpacking meals. To sterilize your spoon, stick it in the next meal’s water as it boils. Done.

What do you make? Its up to you. You can peruse all kinds of recipes online:

<http://www.trailcooking.com/recipe-home/>

Also get a gallon Ziploc bag and fill it with a few snacks. Powerbars, nuts, raisins and the like. Its good to have at least one desert and 2 snacks per day on the trail.

4th Year Backpack Trip Menu

Prepare for the following meals:

Tuesday

AM – Eat before you leave

Lunch – prepare something to be eaten on the trail. No cooking.

Dinner – Any of the wonderful lunch/dinner menu items from the FBC website.

Breakfast – Any of the wonderful breakfast menu items from the FBC website

Snacks – bring 2-3 trail snacks and desert items. Repackage in ziplocs as well, and don't go crazy.

Freezer Bag Cooking Cozy

This is an easy DIY project. To get started you need a roll of Foil Bubble Insulation and a roll of Reflective Foil tape. The bubble insulation consists of a layer of polyethylene bubble wrap sandwiched between two sheets of aluminum. This stuff is easy to find at Home Depot or a well stocked Ace Hardware store.

- 1) The first step is to cut two pieces of the foil bubble insulation with the same width. The stuff is very soft so common household scissors are fine for this task. Next cut one of the pieces down about 4 inches. You want the foil bubble insulation piece to be slightly wider than the freezer bag since you're going to tape them together to form a pocket-like envelope.



- 2) Next, stack the shorter piece of insulation on top of the longer piece, and cut three lengths of reflective tape to join the sides and bottom together.



- 3) Apply the reflective tape to form an insulating envelope and cut off any excess around the edges. Fold the longer piece over the shorter piece and you're done. If you want to be extra fancy, you can also add some velcro tape to the inside of the flap and the outside of the insulated envelope to keep the cozy closed while your freezer bag meal is cooking.



- 4) Finished. Should fit a quart ziplock bag with aplomb.

