

Lightweight Hiking Guide

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1. WHAT TO TAKE

Before taking any item there are four questions that you should ask:

1. **Is it necessary?** If the answer is “Yes” take it, if there is any doubt, leave it at home.
2. **Is it effective?** ie: Will the tent keep out the rain? Will the sleeping bag keep you warm?
3. **Is it as light as possible?** The weight carried on one's back will have an important influence on your enjoyment. The correct pack weight is as little as possible. As a rule of thumb it should not exceed 20% (one fifth) of your body weight and **MUST NOT** exceed 25% (one quarter) of your body weight.
4. **Is it compact?**

2. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE?

(Read pages 110 to 117 of the “Fieldbook for Australian Scouting”)

Personal gear

PACK:

(To carry everything of course.) A framed pack will enable you to carry gear with a minimum of discomfort, as the weight is evenly distributed over your back. Carry a small length of nylon cord for pack repairs.

It is essential that a pack fits properly AND is comfortable. It should have wide shoulder straps and a firm, padded hip belt. If you don't have access to a proper pack, there are a number of places where you can hire one for the weekend. Ask your Scout Leader.

SLEEPING BAG: (Compulsory)

A reasonable quality sleeping bag is essential for a good night's sleep.

TORCH:

A **small** torch should be carried. (Remember to check the batteries).

TOILET GEAR:

Should be carried by each person.

EATING IRONS:

One plate, or bowl, usually plastic, aluminium or enamel, and mug adequate. Aluminium mugs are unsuitable as the rim gets hot and burns your lips. A knife, fork and spoon are necessary, these should be kept in a cloth bag, together with a tea towel.

WATER BOTTLE:

A water bottle (650ml to 1litre), of either plastic or aluminium, **MUST** be carried by each member of your patrol.

WHISTLE:

A whistle is worth carrying for emergency use as its sound will carry much further than the human voice.

FIRST AID KIT:

The Patrol, as a whole, must carry a suitable First Aid Kit for hiking. A kit put together in a plastic lunch type box is often more versatile than a commercially packed kit.

See later page in this handbook for recommended First Aid Kit contents.

BOOTS:

These need not be expensive. They should be in good condition and comfortable. Remember that feet swell when walking and when a load is carried the foot lengthens and widens. A rubber sole with heavy tread will provide good grip on most surfaces.

SOCKS:

Thick cotton socks are needed to absorb moisture and to cushion the feet.

TROUSERS:

Long trousers are essential in cold weather, however, shorts are comfortable in most conditions and should be worn whilst hiking. Tight fitting jeans **should not** be worn. Track suit pants are good for around the camp at night.

- SHIRT:** Your shirt should have long sleeves and a collar for both warmth in cold weather and protection from sunburn. A light "T"-shirt could be carried.
- JUMPER:** A woollen, long sleeved jumper, or equivalent, is necessary.
- PARKA:** A parka or waterproof jacket is your main protection against wind and rain. The best type is a hooded japara type. Padded ski type, sailing jackets or ponchos are not suitable.
- HAT:** A hat **MUST** be worn for sun protection. Your HAT is your best friend.
- SCOUT UNIFORM:** IS NOT REQUIRED FOR SCOUTHIKE 2002.
- However your Patrol will require their correct Troop Scarf & a functional hat.
- If you check into the Finish Point before 2.00pm on Sunday and ALL of your Patrol are wearing their Scarf & hat, an extra 100 points will be awarded.

3. WHAT SHOULD WE TAKE?

PATROL

- TENT:** Separate tentage must be provided for both male and female members of the Patrol. Cheap nylon tents are not suitable. The tent should have an external fly - and do not forget the ropes, poles and pegs. Most tents to-day contain built-in floors; if yours does not, do not forget a ground sheet.
- FOOD:** See section on Hike Food.
- FIRST AID KIT:** See section on First Aid Kit.
- COMPASS:** A simple 'Silva' type is sufficient and relatively inexpensive. It should be worn on a cord around your neck, tied to your belt, or strung through a buttonhole.
- MAP:** You will be supplied with copies of the map during the Friday night coach trip. Every member of your Patrol should become familiar with the intended route and be encouraged to follow progress on the map.
- It should be carried in a plastic folder for protection.
- NOTE PAD AND PENS/PENCILS:** A small selection of coloured pens are useful for marking your map.
- BILLIES:** Usually two small nesting billies will suffice between three people (though you should consider what you have to cook).
- FRYPAN:** A small aluminium frypan should be carried, if needed.
- MISC:** Pot scourer, steel wool pads, tea towels.

4. PACKING

Use a check list that includes every item you will require.

A pack liner should be used inside your pack to keep it waterproof. Clothing and other items should be kept in plastic bags inside this liner. The sleeping bag in particular must be kept dry in all circumstances.

Dry foods are best packed in individual zip lock bags. Wet foods such as margarine, honey, spreads etc are best stored in small plastic or aluminium containers and then stored in a plastic bag.

A pack's comfort depends on how you organise its weight distribution when packing. Place all the heavy items at the top of the pack and as close to your back as possible. Place the lighter and less frequently used items, such as spare clothing, at the bottom. Items most frequently used should be placed close to the top of the pack. Fill billies etc with smaller items.

Everything **MUST** be inside your pack with nothing hanging on the outside.

5. HANDY HINTS

- Make a list of everything you take.
- Everything you take you must carry -- so choose carefully.
- Share common items between Patrol members (e.g. tents, food, cooking utensils, etc.).
- Pack things you are likely to need first at the top of the pack (e.g. lunch, raincoat).
- Do not leave anything hanging or dangling from the outside of the pack. They are easily lost and their swinging can make your walking difficult.
- Pack your First Aid Kit where it is easily accessible. Make sure all members of your Patrol know where it is.
- Do not take glass jars or bottles, nor canned foods.
- Do not buy expensive (or cheap & nasty) equipment. It is better to make do, hire, or borrow equipment.
- Never let Mum, or anyone else for that matter, pack your pack. Pack it yourself - you are going to carry it and use it, so know what is in your pack and where it is.
- After the hike, cross off all the items from your list that you have not used. Next time, leave them behind.
- As P.L. It is your responsibility to make sure that all members of your Patrol have packed their packs correctly and that weight is evenly distributed according to the age and stamina of each member.

6. MENU AND CATERING

It is important to plan a menu for your whole Patrol. Here are some ideas that you may find helpful when planning your Patrol's menu.

BREAKFAST:

LUNCH:

DINNER:

SNACKS:

7. HIKE FOOD HINTS

Keep these things in mind:

- **Instant noodle packs are NOT acceptable as a COMPLETE meal.**
- Make your menu light-weight. Remember, you have to carry it.
- Make sure you can cook what you take. Practice at home first.
- Cook as a Patrol. It is much easier than everyone catering for themselves.
- Make sure your menu is balanced to provide energy, fluid and nourishment.
- Make sure everyone carries a full water bottle.
- Keep your billies in a bag to keep the rest of your pack clean.
- Honey, vegemite and peanut butter have more food value than jams.
- Dried fruits are light to carry. They can be eaten raw, cooked or soaked overnight.

- Carry all rubbish and litter with you. Do not drop anything in the bush. There will be rubbish bins at the "Finish" point. Do NOT bury any rubbish.
- Your Patrol Menu - Must be approved by your Troop Council.

• 8. MENU PLANNER

DAY 1

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

DAY 2

Breakfast

Lunch

9. FIRST AID KIT

A personal First Aid Kit should be carried by each member of your patrol.

It should include:

- 1 triangular bandage;
- 1 x 75mm elastic crepe bandage;
- 1 sealed sterile dressing;
- bandaids or similar;
- safety pins;
- **any personal medications.**

In addition to the above each Patrol should carry, as a Patrol Kit, the following:

- Roll of adhesive dressing strip;
- Pair of scissors;
- Packet of gauze squares;
- 2 Non-stick dressings;
- Roll of adhesive tape (25 mm) ;
- 'Wound Dressings (2 x No 14) ;
- Foil Rescue Sheet;
- Packet of Water-proof matches;
- Fine point tweezers;
- Sun Blockout Cream.

10. TROUBLE SHOOTING - Problems that can occur

(Read pages 329 to 339 of the "Fieldbook for Australian Scouting")

- IT STARTS TO RAIN:** Always anticipate rain. Be prepared and always carry wet weather gear. Remember, in the case of bad weather, your destination or objective suffers - not the members of your Patrol.
- SORE BACKS:** Stop and check the back pack. Check for hard objects which rest against the spine and repack the pack. Check that the load is being carried as high as possible on the shoulders. If the straps are rather slack the pack will sag down and rub against the lower part of the back. The pack might feel right when you start out, but if it is not adjusted properly the back will soon hurt. If some packs are heavier than others share the load or take turns in swapping packs.
- BLISTERS:** A blister can always be treated if you catch it early, at the stage when it's just red skin. Stop immediately and strap sticking plaster across the red area to stop it developing. If you do develop a blister - cover it, do not break it.
- PATROL MEMBERS KEEP STOPPING AND WANT TO SIT: PEOPLE KEEP GETTING LEFT BEHIND:** Another hint - stick sore feet into cold creek water and dry well. Let them to a point. Don't push needlessly or you will put them off hiking for life. There is no need to be too ambitious. Change your plans if possible to something shorter and easier. This can happen to any member of the group. Somebody only has to stop to tie a boot-lace, everyone else walks on, and by the time the lace is tied a considerable gap has developed.
- WATCH OUT FOR VEHICLES:** The pace of your Patrol should be as fast as the slowest person. It is the responsibility of the person in front to stop at reasonable intervals for the rest of the Patrol to catch up. When vehicles approach, the whole Patrol should move to the same side of the road to allow maximum room for the vehicle.
- FEELING GIDDY:** This is usually caused by wearing too many clothes. Remember that even moderate exercise with a pack will increase the body's heat production markedly. A rule of thumb is that, if before moving off, you feel barely warm enough then you have sufficient clothing on.
- FEELING THIRSTY:** This is natural. The body's normal turnover is 2 - 5 litres per day - but, in hot and strenuous conditions, it can be five times this amount. Drink as much as you need.
- FEELING CHILLED:** Immediately you start to feel cold put on a jumper and if this still is not enough add another or a parka. Feeling cold can be caused by a change in the weather or just stopping to eat, which is often the time for extra clothing. But remember to take it off when you start walking again.
- Another tip is to keep nibbling high energy food. Nuts, raisins, glucose, barley sugar, chocolate, etc, are ideal.
- NAUSEA AND HEADACHE:** Heat, tiredness and not eating properly are the usual causes. If a member is feeling sick - stop and rest. Do not try to push on. If you have a headache take a Panadol (or similar) (NB: you can not give one to another person) note down the time you take the Panadol, drink plenty of fluids and rest.
- If dizziness occurs seek assistance.
- ABDOMINAL PAIN:** As P.L. you are responsible for all of your Patrol members. This is often caused by not using the latrine and/or by drinking unclean water.
- Fresh water will be available at all activity sites.
- BITES AND STINGS:** Repellents will usually do the trick. Stingose will reduce itchiness.
- LEECHES:** Leeches are best removed by applying salt. Do not pull them off as the wound will bleed constantly.

11. USING YOUR MAP

(Read pages 60 to 67 of the "Fieldbook for Australian Scouting")

Navigation is the most important skill required for the weekend. Knowing how to use a compass will save you time and walking further than you need. Pay attention to your Topography. Features can change.

THE MAP: This is like an aerial photograph of the terrain taken from high above and reduced to an accurate scale.

THE SCALE: When we say that a map has a scale of 1:25,000 (one to twenty five thousand) it means that one unit on the map represents 25 000 units on the ground, i.e. 1 cm on the map equates 25 000cm or 250m on the ground. A handy tip to remember is to remove the last three zeros from the map (when it is in thousands) and the number left is the actual distance on the ground in metres represented by one millimetre on the map.

CONTOUR LINES: Remember 1 grid square = 1 kilometre
Hills and slopes are always the most obvious features when viewed from the ground. Contour lines are lines drawn through points of equal height above sea level.

GRID REFERENCES: When the slope of any hill is gentle, the contour lines will be widely spaced; if steep, they will be closer together.
Topographical maps are covered with a network of lines forming what is known as a grid. The object of the grid is to make it easy to describe the position of any point on the map.

Each grid line is identified by a number at each end in the border around the map.

To describe any position on the map - the numbered grid lines must be read first from west to east and then from south to north. The square in which the point is situated must then be mentally subdivided into tenths in order to give a pin-point accurate reference.

A BEARING: This is a clockwise angle measured in degrees from north to any point in question. It can however be measured from either true North or Magnetic North and therefore should always be stated from which it was measured.

MAGNETIC VARIATION: This is the angle between true north (the direction of the north pole) and magnetic north (the direction in which the compass needle points).

The magnetic variation changes slightly from year to year and considerably from place to place. Around Sydney magnetic variation can generally be taken as about 12 degrees east of true north. In the eastern states of Australia magnetic variation is always east of true north and so permits the rule:

- When converting from magnetic (compass) bearing to a true (map) bearing add the variation; and
- When converting a true (map) bearing to a magnetic (compass) bearing subtract the variation.

NOTE: Holding a compass near metallic objects (fences, belt buckles etc.) will disturb the accuracy of the compass.

ROUTE PLANNING: When deciding where to go you must ensure that the trip will be within the capability of all members of your Patrol.

AIM: Have a close look at what you want to achieve and where you want to go. Having defined your objectives tell your members about them well in advance. They will be much more psyched up to get there than just walk on and on.

ROUTE: In planning your route the most important consideration is a realistic assessment of the capability of your Patrol and, in particular, its weakest member. Be careful not to over estimate the distance you can cover. Forget about the distance that you feel you should be able to cover in a day and think in terms of hours you wish to spend on foot. Allowing for Activities, lunch, breaks and rests along the way.

The best advice is the "Naismith's Rule" which states:

"For an average walker with a medium pack allow 1 hour for every 5 km of easy going, 3 km for easy scrambling and 1.5 km for extremely rough country, **plus** 1 hour for every 500m up and 1 hour for every 1000m down. For every hour over 5 hours add up to 1 hour to allow for fatigue."

Another rule of thumb states that children (up to say 14 years) can walk with a pack for as many kilometres per day as their birthdays in good weather and level track.