



Skills Session: Campsite Selection

Time Frame

1 hour 15 minutes

Materials

- Campsites area where a campsite can be set up
- Tents, one per participant (Provided by the participant)
- Extra tent stakes

Resources

- *Boy Scout Handbook*—chapter 9, “Camping”
- *Guide to Safe Scouting*

Goals

By the end of this session, participants will be able to

- Train Scouts in selecting, establishing, maintaining, and breaking down campsites with consideration for patrol safety, preventing damage to equipment, and minimizing harm to the environment.
- Pitch a tent

Assignments

- Spend at least one night on a patrol or troop campout. Sleep in a tent you have helped pitch. 🛖 T2
- On one of these campouts, select your patrol site and sleep in a tent that you have pitched. 😊 S2b

Before You Begin

While safety considerations and Leave No Trace principles need to be addressed immediately, campsite selection as a class should be taught after participants have had the opportunity to pick their sites. Reinforce the information covered in this session by exposing them to both good and undesirable campsites.

The skills session on Leave No Trace contains additional information helpful to this lesson. Leave No Trace will help reinforce the practices taught in this lesson.

Lesson Plan: Campsite Selection

Selecting a Campsite

Choosing the right campsite can make or break your outdoor experience. A good site offers plenty to see and do while allowing you to practice no-trace camping skills. Planning ahead, knowing how to behave in the outdoors, and being respectful of other visitors all play a part in ensuring a safe and unforgettable outdoor adventure.

CAMP SMART

Responsible campers know that

- Tents will mat down vegetation and deprive it of water, air, and sunlight.
- Walking to and from pathways in and around camp will trample vegetation and form unwanted pathways.
- Heavy foot traffic in the same area will compact the soil, making it difficult for new plants to take root.
- They should bypass places that might not withstand the impact of camping and hiking.

Campsite Guidelines

Consider these issues when selecting your campsite.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.** Use established campsites whenever you can.
- **SAFETY.** Avoid dead trees and limbs. Be weather-wise.
- **SIZE.** Comply with area regulations on group size, and choose a site that's large enough to accommodate the group.
- **WATER.** Be sure the group has a safe and sufficient supply of water.
- **TERRAIN.** Consider drainage, natural cover, and sunlight *before* setting up camp.

- **STOVES AND CAMPFIRES.** Use lightweight camp stoves whenever possible. If a fire must be made for cooking, use existing fire rings where possible.
- **PRIVACY.** Respect the privacy and solitude of other visitors.
- **PERMISSION.** When camping on private property, get permission in advance from landowners or from land managers when using public lands. Secure the proper permits.

Activities

1. Let the participant patrol select its campsite, and have patrol members critique the site they have chosen.
2. Have patrols set up their own campsite, pitch their tents, and establish a cooking area.
3. Just before leaving, walk the patrols through their campsite. Evaluate how well the site was camouflaged and what improvements, if any, could be made.

