

Campsite Selection, Tents, and Bedding

- Learning Objectives** As a result of this training experience, participants should be able to
- Explain how to select a suitable campsite.
 - Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of various types of tents.
 - Demonstrate the proper method of setting up a tent.
 - Discuss the various types of camp beds and explain the advantage of each.
 - Make a ground bed.
- Trainer Preparation**
- Study the training outline.
 - Review the information on envelope beds and homemade tents in the Outdoorsman activity badge section of the *Webelos Handbook*.
 - Gather the necessary materials and equipment for this session, and practice your demonstrations.
 - Review the information on heavy-duty builder's plastic in the Outdoorsman activity badge section of the *Webelos Leader Guide* and the *Webelos Handbook*.
 - Review the Family Camping section of chapter 4 of the *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*.
 - If the Outdoor Leader Skills staff will not have a campsite established by the beginning of this session, set up your sample tents.
 - Practice and time your presentation in advance to help you stay within the time limit.
- Materials**
- A sheet of heavy-duty builder's plastic, about 8 feet by 9 feet
- A length of rope, long enough to tie between two trees or posts
- A plastic ground sheet or old shower curtain
- Two old blankets
- Six large blanket pins
- Samples of various types of tents used by Boy Scouts in your area (not required if the Outdoor Leader Skills staff will have a campsite established by the beginning of this session)
- 33108, *Webelos Handbook*, Outdoorsman activity badge
- 33853B, *Webelos Leader Guide*, "Webelos Camping"
- 33640, *Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills*, "Campsite Selection" session
- Before You Begin** Although this skills session is similar to the one for Boy Scout leaders, it is presented at a different time and is tailored to the specific needs of Webelos den leaders. If your Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills schedule is arranged to allow the Webelos den leaders to participate in the session with the Boy Scout leaders, that is encouraged.
- Time** 45 minutes. Start on time. End on time.
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Site Selection

Explain that camping with Webelos Scouts should be less challenging than camping with Boy Scouts. Webelos den leaders should be more selective in choosing a campsite. Here are some Webelos Scout-specific considerations to add to the list we heard earlier.

- Look for an area free from insect pests.
- Avoid camping near poisonous plants.
- Avoid situations where sleeping will be unnecessarily uncomfortable, such as in rough terrain, uneven ground, steep hills, or depressions where water can collect.
- Don't travel too far from where the cars are parked. If a Webelos Scout has to carry heavy equipment too far, the experience can become unpleasant even before it begins!

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.

Setting Up Camp

Review these steps in setting up camp:

- Locate tent sites.
- Locate dining fly sites.
- Locate food preparation sites.
- Locate cooking fire sites.
- Set up dining fly.
- Set up tents.
- Locate water supply.
- Gather wood and build a fire, if needed.
- Set up flagpole. Encourage participants to make a habit of flying the U.S. flag at camp. If a flagpole is not available, fly the flag from the branch of a tree.

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.

Bedding

Explain that a Webelos Scout won't have a good camping experience if he doesn't get a good night's sleep, and to do that, he must have a comfortable place to lie down. Show and review the information on envelope beds in the Outdoorsman activity badge section of the *Webelos Handbook*.

Using the materials you brought, demonstrate how to follow those instructions to make a ground bed. Explain that there should be as much material under you as over you. This provides warmth against the coolness of the ground as well as cold night air. Point out that many Webelos Scouts have not yet invested in camping gear, so some might bring blankets from home or a variety of sleeping bags borrowed from others.

Emphasize the importance of airing bedding and sleeping bags daily in the sun, off of the ground. This gets rid of moisture, especially on rainy or damp days.

Homemade Tents

Explain that while some families will be able to purchase tents for their Webelos Scouts, others may not. That's why the *Webelos Handbook* includes instructions on how to make a homemade tent. Show and review the information on homemade tents in the Outdoorsman activity badge section of the *Webelos Handbook*.

Using the materials you brought, demonstrate how to follow those instructions to make a homemade tent. Enlist the help of experienced participants if necessary. Show and review the information on heavy-duty builder's plastic in the Outdoorsman activity badge section of the *Webelos Handbook*.

Manufactured Tents

Bring the participants to the location where tents are set up (either the Outdoor Leader Skills staff's campsite or the place where you set up your sample tents).

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each type of tent displayed. Emphasize that "**no flames in tents**" is a BSA rule we must follow. This includes lanterns, candles, or any source of flames. Point out that no tent is flameproof. A flame-retardant tent is a tent that has been treated with a chemical to make it stop burning when the source of flame is removed.

Weather

Discuss how to be prepared for rain.

- Always assume the weather will turn bad during a campout.
- Tell how to deal with unexpected rain during the night. (Be sure tents are all secured and dining flies and equipment are in waterproof shelter such as a building or vehicle.)
- Explain why to avoid touching wet tents during rain. (The fabric will get wet on the inside.)

- Explain why no insect spray should be on tents. (It destroys the waterproofing.)
- Point out that canvas and rope will shrink when wet. Tight ropes can rip a tent. Tension on canvas and tent ropes may need to be relieved when it rains.
- Explain that a dining fly is especially susceptible to damage in winds. Lower the side facing the wind and be sure it is well staked.

Summary

Summarize by stressing the importance of simple Webelos den outdoor camping. Webelos den camping is intended to be only a small step up from family camping. It will be important for Webelos den leaders to tell their den that more advanced camping will happen in the Boy Scout troop.