

# BSA TROOP 219

## Winter Camping Tips

### WINTER CAMP – WHY?

Why on earth would we want to camp in the winter?!? It's cold and dark...

- It can be a lot of fun – sledding, snow-skiing, snowball fights, ice skating, hockey, snow castle building
- It allows us to test and improve on our skills – if you can do it in the winter, you are a master!



Winter Camping - It's been done before...

### PREPARATION

- Don't go anywhere alone – buddy system
- Check the weather forecast and adjust plans accordingly
- Be aware of natural hazards – avalanche zones, creeks/streams, wind tunnels
- Bring or have access to extra food, water, and shelter

### CLOTHING

- Layers
  - Base layer – underwear – synthetic materials that will “wick” away sweat
  - Middle layer – insulating – fleece, partial synthetics, avoid jeans if possible
  - Outer layer – water/wind proof – breathable (\$\$) or semi-breathable
- If you get warm outside, unzip first, and wait. Take off a layer at a time if necessary, always with a pause to check impact and comfort.
- When you stop outside activities – add a layer
- Boots
  - Good – waterproof snow/activity boots
  - OK – “moon” boots, work boots
  - Ugly – sneakers
  - If your boots are not waterproof, add a plastic bag liner
- Bring extra socks, especially if your feet sweat...sweaty feet = cold feet
- Hats - Bring 2 (knit), sleep in 1, wear 1 during day – Balacavas are good

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*YOU LOSE 40% of YOUR BODY HEAT THROUGH YOUR HEAD – If your feet are cold, put on a hat!*

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- Gloves
  - Bad – Knit or woven “water catchers”
  - OK – mittens
  - Good – waterproof, extended wrists, adjustable
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, chapstick

### WATER

- You need as much water during winter camping as summer. Water is the medium that chemical reactions need to run your body, including the processes that warm you!
- Bring and fill and use your water bottle

- Water still freezes at 32 Deg...fill your buckets at night – it's easier to thaw a full pot than pour a frozen jug into the pot to thaw...

## SLEEPING BAGS

- Plan for 10 Deg colder bag than you think you need – you can always vent a little when needed
- Use your drawstrings around your face – not your neck
- Closed cell sleeping pads will add 10 Deg – air mattresses will take away 20 Deg
- If you need to increase the rating of your bag – wrap a blanket around the outside or around you on the inside
- Properly sized bags are key – extra room is extra air to heat. If your bag is too big, fold a portion underneath you
- Keep your dry gloves and day hat in the bag with you.

## SMART STUFF

- Go to the bathroom before bed...nothing worse than unnecessary midnight trips
- Winter gear on the outside pockets of your pack, ready to grab.
- Change all your clothes at night – ALL OF THEM
  - Wear your next day inner layer on you at night – no cold inner layer in the morning
- Have a high energy snack before bed to drive energy burn – trail mix, granola bar, snickers bar
- If you are cold at night – exercise...push-ups, crunches, jumping jacks...something to move the blood around.
- If that doesn't work, wake up a patrol leader. – A Scout is Brave – Sometimes this means pushing through a fear, but sometimes this means recognizing when you are over your head and being brave enough to ask for help. Nobody will begrudge you for needing help. But you had better share that Snickers bar...

## REFERENCE MATERIALS

<http://www.boyscouttrail.com/library/wintercampingtips.asp>

<http://www.backpacking.net/wintertips.html>

<http://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/winter-camping.html>

## THIS MAN IS A GENIUS

