



## **COLD WEATHER CAMPING TIPS**



**Plan.** Research how to stay warm in cold weather. Review the *Boy Scout Handbook* and check-out:

<http://www.three-peaks.net/coldcamp.htm>,  
<http://www.bsatroop98.com/wintercamping.htm>,  
<http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/index.shtml>,  
<http://www.wix.com/troop67/>, click "Cold Weather Camping."

**Pack.** You need enough of the right clothing: 2 shirts (wool or synthetic flannel, not cotton), turtlenecks, 2 pairs of wool or casual pants such as Dockers, polypropylene long underwear, waterproofed boots, 2 pairs of heavy socks (wool recommended), 2 pairs of lighter socks (preferably polypropylene liners), wind-breaker, wool stocking cap, parka or heavy jacket, wool mittens or ski gloves, poncho or rain gear. Avoid all-cotton clothing such as sweatshirts, sweatpants and blue jeans. Cotton absorbs and retains moisture, and loses all insulating capability when wet.

**Layering.** Will allow you to regulate your body temperature. You can add layers if you begin to feel cool, or remove layers to keep from sweating. Suggested layers:

*Inner layer* - Long underwear of synthetic, wicking materials (polyester, acrylic or polypropylene), which wick moisture away from skin.

*Insulating layer(s)* - Synthetic pile or fleece sweatshirts or pants, which do not absorb moisture and retain insulating capability when wet. Wool or wool/synthetic blend shirts and pants are very warm and maintain insulating capability when wet.

*Outer layer* - Windproof, water resistant shell, preferably insulated. Ski pants, ski jackets and snowmobile suits work exceptionally well.

**Head and feet cover.** Your body loses 80% of its heat through your head. Keep it covered. For feet, wear thin sock liner of wool, silk, polypropylene or synthetic wicking material, plus heavy outer socks of wool or wool blend. Boots should be waterproof, large enough to wear multiple pairs of socks and still fit loosely. Duck boots or felt-lined rubber boots are fairly inexpensive and work well.

**Winter Equipment.** Keep all underwear and socks in ziplock bags, other clothing in garbage bags or waterproof stuff sacks. Use a mummy sleeping bag or other winter bag with liner. Place foam or other insulation under your sleeping bag. Wool blankets are great. Hand warmers are nice.

**Before Your Crawl In.** Use the latrine. Change into dry clothes. Never, ever wear wet clothes to sleep. Do not place head in bag because that will trap moisture from your breath. Wear a stocking cap. Fluff bag. Get warm before going to bed by exercising lightly, but not enough to break a sweat. If you have a weak bladder, you may want a large-mouth plastic bottle, but be sure the lid is watertight! Place clothing for next day in bag to keep it warm.

**Nutrition.** Eating right is even more important in cold weather. Eat high-energy foods throughout the day.

**Hydration.** Drink lots of water. Avoid dehydrating foods and fluids such as coffee and soda.

**Attitude.** Camping in the cold can be challenging and rewarding. Be positive and helpful.

**Safety.** Use buddy system to check for frostbite and hypothermia. Report suspected health problems to adult leadership.