

Troop 91 Cold Weather Camping

RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR KEEPING WARM IN THE SACK

1. **THE SLEEPING BAG DOESN'T HEAT YOU; YOU HEAT IT.** So use this rule: **“Thickness is warmth”**. If you're cold, add some more insulation (blankets, clothes, more newspaper).
2. **INSULATE UNDERNEATH OF YOU.** The ground is cold and you will lose body heat if you are in contact with the ground. You should have 3 times (in insulating value) under you that you have on top of you. Make sure you never come in direct contact with the ground. Stay on the pad. Use a foam pad or closed-cell self-inflating pad. Self-inflating closed-cell pads are best (Therma-rest is one brand-name, Target carries a knock-off brand called Camprest which is much cheaper). You can also use blankets or a piece of carpet to help insulate underneath of you. **DO NOT USE** a blow-up air mattress. Air mattresses only increase the amount of air that you need to heat up.
3. **DO NOT SLEEP WITH YOUR HEAD IN THE SLEEPING BAG!** Your breath contains water. If you close your bag with your head inside the bag will get wet and you will be cold.
4. **CHANGE CLOTHES.** NEVER sleep in wet clothes or clothes that you have worn during the day. Even perspiration will chill you at night. Wear a layer of dry polypropylene underwear, loose socks, wool or wooly dry socks, and a fleece or hooded sweatshirt. **NO COTTON!!!** Cotton clothing holds water and will make you cold. Cotton sweats are just like the name implies: they absorb your body moisture and trap it next to your skin making you cold.
5. **WEAR A SKI HAT TO BED.** Remember 70% of body heat is lost through the top of your head. Wear a knit hat or a full ski mask. Wool or acrylic (cheap knit watch caps from Wal-Mart) caps are best.
6. **VENTILATE YOUR TENT:** Leave the back or top flap of your tent open about 4 inches. This will allow the moisture from your breath to escape out of the tent and not collect on the sides
7. **EAT A CANDY BAR** or other High Calorie food (nuts, etc.) before you go to bed: This increases your metabolism (moves your blood faster) and it helps keep you warm.. Your stomach is your furnace and will generate heat while you sleep. Before going into the tent drink some warm cider or hot instant cocoa to hydrate you and give you some carbohydrates for your inner furnace. Make sure you don't try to sleep dehydrated: you'll sleep colder.
REMEMBER: NO FOOD IN THE TENT!
8. **GO TO THE BATHROOM BEFORE BED:** This saves you a trip in the middle of the night, keeping the heat in your bag and tent.
9. **DO NOT DRY “WET” CLOTHES IN BAG:** Moisture will travel from wet clothes to sleeping bag.
10. **PUT TOMORROW'S CLOTHES UNDER BAG:** This heats up clothes for tomorrow's cold morning and also provides more insulation.
11. **FLUFF UP YOUR BAG:** Always fluff up bag before using to create the thickness important in keeping warm.
12. **KEEP IT DRY:** Keep all your sleeping gear dry and follow these rules, and winter camp should prove to be a rewarding experience. Unzip your bag during the day and let it air-out. This reduces the moisture in your bag.

STAYING WARM DURING THE DAY

1. Clothing does not make you warm; it is your body processes that keep you warm. Clothing merely provides the insulation to preserve your warmth.
2. Layered thickness is warmth. Use synthetics against your skin. They wick moisture away from your skin and help keep you warm. **DO NOT WEAR COTTON!** Wool clothing is best but needs wind protection, synthetics are next best, down is OK as long as it stays dry and cotton is a poor choice.
3. Make your outer-most layer wind-resistant.
4. Keep your torso warm so that it can send heat to the extremities. A vest works wonders. Don't constrict your wrists and ankles. It keeps warm blood from reaching your extremities.
5. Do not hang out next to the fire thinking it will keep you warm. If you can feel the heat of the fire then you are not adequately insulated and need to put on another layer.
5. Avoid sweating by ventilation. Use those layers and remove when hot, put back on when cold.
6. Keep rain and wind out of your insulation.
7. Use your head. Keep it covered when you're cold; remove cap as you warm up to avoid sweating.

- 8 Keep active. Moving around is the best way to stay warm.
9. For your cold feet, make sure the socks are clean and dry and roomy. Tight clothing just won't keep you as warm.
10. If your feet are cold, **put a hat on.**
11. Remember the word "**COLD**" –

Keep your clothing	Clean.
avoid	Overheating
wear clothing	Loose and
Keep it	Dry

RECOMMENDED CLOTHING FOR TWO DAY WINTER CAMP

In addition or in substitution to what you would normally bring to camp, bring:

2 shirts (wool is best, or synthetic flannel)
Poly-fleece (Polarfleece type) (avoid cotton) or warm sweater
2 pairs wool or synthetic pants (Avoid cotton pants like jeans if possible. They absorb moisture like a sponge).
1 pr. fishnet, polythermal, silk, or polypropylene underwear (not the 100% cotton stuff) for day wear
1 pr. of the same long underwear for nighttime wear.
1 pr. boots (WATERPROOFED with Nikwax or other waterproofing) or 'duck' boots.
3 pairs of heavy socks (wool recommended) (one with your sleeping clothes). Avoid Cotton.
3 pairs lighter socks (polypropylene is best) (one with your sleeping clothes)
Windbreaker (as is or part of heavier jacket)
balaclava (ski mask) or stocking cap (wool or synthetic is best)
down or quilted vest
parka or heavy jacket with a hood if possible
2 pr. gloves or mittens (WOOL) Cheap acrylic gloves can be used as liners
1 pr extra shoes
20 degree sleeping bag and fleece blanket liner OR 40 degree sleeping bag with fleece blanket liner and 2 wool blankets to go over/around it.
Closed cell sleeping pad (Target has these for less than \$20) or foam pad with garbage bag cover and an extra blanket for more insulation.

Pack all clothes in ziplock bags. Put your sleeping clothes together in a zip lock and store it in your sleeping bag. Clothes and shoes should be loose. It is always best to stay dry when camping in the snow or cold, but you can expect to get wet and should be prepared. Boots or other shoes that are not waterproof will normally start getting the feet wet and cold after less than 15 minutes in the snow (depending on temperature, the colder it is, the longer the feet stay dry). Low top shoes will not keep the snow out of the shoes. Gaiters can be made from plastic bags and a strong tape like duck tape. Do not cover the bottom of your shoes with plastic, doing so will cause you to lose almost all of your traction (and you will fall down!).

Unless your parents are planning to buy some of the items on this list anyway, do not run out and start spending lots of money on clothes and equipment. Borrow the necessary clothing if you don't already have it (after all we live in South Carolina and winter camping doesn't come around too often). If all your pants are jeans, for example, bring three or four pairs and change frequently. If you are in doubt or have questions, call one of the troop leaders for advice. Check the Army-Navy store for wool pants. They will come in handy. Wal-Mart, Old Navy, and Target have sales on fleece pullovers and synthetic mittens and gloves.