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About the Author

Tracey Warren believes that camping is a wonderful activity for almost everyone.

"I've been surprised how many people, when I tell them that we regularly go camping only want to talk about the "problems"!

I've written my ebook to explain that camping is a great activity for almost everybody.

I've learned from lots of other campers and think that my readers will share our enthusiasm after their first or next trip.

I share a lot of ways to ensure that you will have a great experience, whether your next trip is your first or your fiftieth!

More people are becoming enthusiastic campers every year. If you want to have the right information to prepare for your next trip, and make every minute memorable for the right reasons, I believe this ebook will be a great help.

Every would-be camper has a lot of questions about cost, safety, weather, taking the children or pets and other topics.

I hope that my book will help them get started.

I think that many of the tips will still be valuable when their kids are taking their own children camping.

Camping can draw people together. It's a great idea for a romantic escape or a family holiday. And you will have marvelous memories that will keep you smiling for the rest of your life.

Introduction

This camping guide is focused on making your next trip one you will enjoy and want to repeat as soon and as often as possible.

Camping at this time can be as easy or as challenging as you want it to be.

But, there are many ways that you can improve the experience and can help to preserve the areas you visit for more people to enjoy long into the future.

I'll take you through the essential planning phase and then every step until you're back home and your tales are inspiring your envious friends to do something similar themselves in the near future.

Choosing Your Type of Adventure

The growing popularity of camping has encouraged an explosion in commercial options ranging from very basic to luxurious.

Of course, you can still simply go with little more than a pack on your back. But, you must make room in that pack for the necessary licenses and permits!

The choice for your first couple of trips should be places which are well within the capabilities of everyone in your group.

When you have accumulated some experience, you will be better able to judge just how wild you can go next time.

Traditional bush camping is great for some people, but there are other



choices which can help to make the camping experience more accessible for people that either could not handle that sort of challenge or who want to focus on enjoyment and not make the challenge the main focus of their trip.

Backyard camping is at the other end of the range of camping options. It could be a good first step for younger children who have shown they want to go camping or whose parents want to take them camping, but use this as a first, safe and easy step.

But, please ban cables, computers, wi-fi and electronic tablets for the night.

Boat camping could involve canoes, kayaks or other small boats. It can be a way to explore unspoiled areas and get a different perspective on the treasures which we have in our area.

This can be a great option, mostly for the fit and adventurous. But, I have heard of people that are less fit and even families who do this after carefully selecting the area where they have their trip and checking the conditions.

They plan short stages so that they reach their camping spots in daylight and without exhausting themselves so they can get maximum enjoyment from each part of the journey. This choice involves greater demands on everyone involved but the rewards include experiences and memories that most of us will never be able to have.

4 Wheel Camping in an RV (Recreational Vehicle) is also very popular. It has brought many more people into contact with our country's natural treasures and, in most cases, given them a better idea of why the natural areas we still have are worth protecting for the enjoyment of future generations.

Tent camping is probably still the most widely practiced type of camping. Many people get their first experience of it with their parents or while they are members of groups like the scouts.

All of the available options have their particular special benefits. Whatever one you choose, I know that you will be glad you joined the other millions of campers around the world!

Planning Your Trip

The more careful and thoroughly you plan your trip, the better the experience will be.

I will help you to avoid problems and share the best tips I know about how to minimize any potentially harmful situations.

But, there are always likely to be some unexpected occurrence that will pop up.

If you are prepared, then you minimize the possible risk and the story of how you overcame it might be a highlight of future family chats.

Carry a GPS or other signalling equipment.

Take a First Aid kit.

Make sure it's the right time to visit your destined location.

Crowds, heat, frost, hurricanes, storms, forest fires, are all considerations to think about.

Get advice from people that have been there before and from Park authorities or local Tourism groups.

Remember that they may have rose-colored glasses when they write their descriptions or experiences about the area, which are different from you or other members of your group.

Family Camping

The thought of camping with the family can be really exciting though you probably realize there is potential for disasters big and small.

But, the memories and bonding from shared experiences provided by these trips will be worth the effort.

The suggestions in this section will help you ensure that you and your family can have a trip which will be a highlight of your year!

Start small. I guarantee that keeping your first family trip as short as possible will give you the best chance of it being enjoyed by every member of the family.

That is really important because you want to give your children a positive experience with their first that will encourage them to look forward to more family trips with you and, later on, with their own families.

Although long trips may seem more exciting, there are probably places within half to one hour of your home with plenty of features which could keep everyone amused for two or three days and have them heading home wanting more.

Pre-trip Check-up

Every member of your family or group should have a check-up from your doctor before your trip, especially those who have no experience of these sort of adventures.

Make sure that you have sufficient supply of any medications which anyone in your group has to have available.

They should have a list of those medications on them at all times in case they become separated or are in an accident and there is no-one to tell the medical personal about allergies or any significant medical factors.

Each person should have details about who should be contacted in an emergency on them – metal bracelets are good.

This may sound alarmist but people's lives are saved every year by following these suggestions rather than depending on, "It will never happen to me!"

You should also ensure that you check for anything which has been reported in the area, such as a disease outbreak or unsuitable weather which could affect the enjoyment of your trip.

Make sure that you inform people where you expect to be and when.

Many camping locations have registers where you can write details about your group, where you are going and when you should be expected to arrive.

Always remember to make a final, careful assessment of the suitability of the selected location for ALL members of your group.

If anyone has special needs, inquire about what facilities are available in the area where you are thinking of going.

If someone has a medical condition which might interfere with their ability to complete the venture, you need to decide if they could be taken to a suitable hospital or other facility in an emergency, preferably without depending on rescue services.



Even when the services are available, the experience of an emergency

evacuation may have lasting negative effects on the patient and also cause severe stress and risk for others as well.

If you are thinking about taking your pet dog with you, I would generally recommend against it unless there are kennels available.

Looking after the humans in your group can involve some risk but the risk to a pet that is not familiar with the area or experienced and capable of surviving there would be much higher.

For your first one or two ventures, I suggest that you be cautious and choose places and activities which are well within your ability.

When you have some experience, you will be able to experiment and expand your horizons with less risk to yourself and less stress to those who care about you.

Preparing in Advance

Personal Ready-to-Go Pack

It will save time and teach personal responsibility if you give each family member their own pack of personal camping supplies. In the pack, they keep basic supplies which they will need for each trip.

They check it after each trip and replace any items as soon as possible, so that they have their pack ready before the planning for the next trip even starts.

Each person should have cutlery, two plates and two cups. I used to take one but these items seem to get damaged or lost more than anything else.

Matches: (Either wooden or a metal permanent match) and a lighter. These are only for adults and older teenagers and for emergency use, of course.

Flashlight and batteries: Always check the condition of each flashlight's internal connections, batteries and bulb regularly.

Spare batteries and bulbs: Should be in the family pack and also checked regularly.

Bottle of water: Clean and fill this shortly before each trip. Also, have a larger supply in the family pack.

Compass or GPS navigator (or both): Make sure that each of the older people in your group know how to use these items before you start your trip.

Whistles and electronic personal alarms: Both of these items have proved their value when people have been lost and/or injured on a camping trip. The whistles are useful for searchers, people that are lost, and also just for signaling between members of your group when you are exploring.

Personal supplies: Each individual can decide what they must include in their personal pack, so that their trip will be enjoyable instead of just bearable. But, it's important that they are solely responsible for packing and carrying these items. That will ensure that the packs are kept within reason, at least for the second and later trips!

Some possibilities are a T-shirt, inflatable pillow, toothpaste, brush, skin lotion, sunscreen, toothpicks, medicines, camera, battery and memory card, scrapbook.

Caution with Campfires



An essential part of the traditional camping experience is a campfire. It provides warmth, safety, light and heat for cooking those delicious campfire meals.

But, you must check what rules are set for the site or area where you will be camping.

They are there to keep you and other campers safe and protect the area and its wildlife so others will be able to enjoy similar experiences there in the future.

As well as the legislation, you will need to keep up to date with daily reports about temporary bans and restrictions, usually due

to changes in weather conditions.

When you camp in an area where a fire is permitted, you still need to be very careful.

In some areas, fires are only allowed where fires have been previously made and you must use a ring of stones which is already in place.

if you build a new firespot, put a ring of stones around it which are large enough to keep the fire inside the ring.

Make sure that it is well clear of all structures, trees, vehicles and vegetation, especially in warm weather.

Check wind direction as well.

Some sites ban individual fires and provide a larger, communal fire which can have some advantages.

If you are new to campfire cooking, there will usually be someone (or several people), who will willingly give you advice and help you make a success of your first efforts.

They may share some good recipes and other camping tips from their wider experience.

Burning cans and other rubbish is bad for the environment. Stick to paper and wood.



Always have a responsible adult watching the fire and double-check that your fire is completely out before you go to bed or start to pack up.

The first thing you should set in place when you are building a fire is some reliable means of fully extinguishing it.

Check the area around where you make the fire and remove any flammable rubbish before you light the fire.

A bucket of water might work, but carelessly throwing it on a fire could wash some sparks or embers onto flammable material nearby. A hose, or bucket with a pump sprayer or a bucket of sand should work well.

Children, like most adults are fascinated by flames, so you must be very careful when they are anywhere near your fire.

Also, don't let them wear any clothing which is flammable near it, such as some types of pajamas.

Ensure that you put water on the fire but ensure it is completely out by sifting through the residue and check everything is cold.

There is more good safety advice at <http://www.smokeythebear.com>

Why There are Firewood Restrictions

Fuel. You may want to take some wood with you. Always check the rules for the particular area which you are going to.

You may not be allowed to bring any wood into some areas unless you can prove that it has been treated to prevent there being any disease or pests in it which might cause problems.

Many areas are also subject to restrictions on what wood you can gather and use for your fires. You may only be able to use dead wood which has separated from trees or none at all.

These rules became necessary because of the damage caused by thoughtless campers in the past.

This site has a lot of well-reasoned information about problems caused by moving wood into camping areas.

<http://www.dontmovefirewood.org/burn-safe.html>

The problem with bringing wood to your camp is explained at the above website. They point out that, among other problems, introduced bugs are already harming the industry built around the harvesting of maple syrup.

Although that site is in the United States of America, I am sure that there are similar problems developing in other countries as well.

My other objection to cutting wood in a wild area just to burn it is that you could be harming the wild-life which live in and around the tree you cut, even if it is just a couple of limbs.

Also, the area where the limbs are removed from are more likely to become diseased and that could cause more trees to suffer as the disease gains a hold in the area.

The rules about moving wood vary in each State. Some are okay about you using kiln-dried small scraps as kindling but you should check each State where you travel as you risk significant fines if you break the laws in any way.

Favorite Snacks

S'mores are a favorite treat for many campers. They are simple to make but you are likely to get a little sticky. Most people don't seem to mind!

They were popular with the American Girl Scouts from the 1920's.

There are just three ingredients:

1. Crackers (Graham Crackers are usually used)
2. Marshmallows, and
3. Chocolate.

The cracker is broken in half, the marshmallows are melted slightly over a fire. The chocolate is spread on the cracker and the marshmallow pressed between the two halves of the cracker.

Although they can be made by using a stove or microwave oven for the heating, the outdoor version is usually a lot more popular and any mess is likely to be much easier to clean up!

Black Bean Salsa is a very popular Mexican dish which almost every cook prepares slightly differently. The beans are highly nutritious and available in canned or dried form.

Commonly used ingredients include black beans, diced tomatoes (some fresh if possible), sweet corn, lime and/or lemon juice, chopped spring onions and chilies with the seeds removed.

Mix everything together and chill overnight in the refrigerator. Carry in a cooler bag.

Choosing Your Tent



It's not overstating things to suggest this is the most important decision any camper makes after deciding who they will go camping with!

Take your time when you are deciding what tent you will buy because it is likely to be

a significant cost and will affect how you feel about each trip you make.

The right choice will give you great satisfaction, protection and peace of mind.

A bad choice will make you unhappy and uncomfortable (or worse) every time you have to use it and you may be driven to the point where you discard it and spend even more money on something more in line with your real needs.

Cost: The first consideration for most of us is how much can we spend on the tent?

What you spend on your tent is really an investment. You probably will have a top figure and will then try to get the best set of features in a tent which is appropriate for the places you will be going.

Quality of material and construction is very important. If your umbrella falls apart on a shopping trip, you can buy another almost anywhere. But, you may not even be able to make temporary repairs if your tent springs a leak during a storm two days into your week-long camping trip. You need to ensure that the seams are very strong and all accessories for your tent are also high quality.

Every camper has their own preferences for either aluminum or fiberglass poles.

The weather and the type of terrain you will be traveling over and camping in will be the next major consideration.

An occasional camper can get away with a cheaper tent with fewer features. If you're going regularly, you will want to spend a little more so that you enjoy the trips more.

Family Tent: If you want your family to share one tent, you will need a large structure with an area where some members can get necessary privacy when they need it.

Two smaller tents may be a better choice. They will be easier for you to transport. Setting up the two smaller structures will require less effort and time. You will particularly appreciate that when you are packing up everything when it is time to head for another site or to go home.

Parents and children in separate tents will give everyone breathing space and privacy which will be valued after the hours together exploring and enjoying the area.

If you select a large tent, you will have to ensure that the locations where you want to camp have level spaces available which are big enough for it to be set up.

Style is another important consideration.

A family or group might be more comfortable in a tent with vertical walls and sloping room.

Many suppliers can also sell you extensions for some of their models, which may let you use a smaller tent and to add the extension only when it is needed.

Dome tents are popular with campers that appreciate their ease of use.

A-frames are also simple in design, will help you keep dry and are great when you are able to travel light.

You need to add a groundsheet to your tent if it does not have one. It protects everyone from the dirt, water and any insects or other pests which might pop in without the barrier in place.

An extra tarpaulin is worthwhile if you can fit it in. You can use it to throw over the top of your tent if you get very heavy rain or to wrap around so that they are less likely to attract wildlife

Yurts and Tipis

These are alternatives to regular tents.

They are based on traditional designs and show that some old ideas are still very useful.

The Yurt originated in Central Asia. It was a sturdy structure which could easily shelter a family but also could be packed up in sections that could be transported to the next camp.

Some people in Western countries make Yurts which are like the originals but using locally available woods and substituting waterproof canvas for the original material to give better protection against the wetter weather.

There are also individuals and companies producing variations of the Yurt with their own adaptations and all modern materials.

A lot of commercial camping sites offer Yurt-style accommodation which is very popular.

Tipis (or teepees) are popular. Their main unique feature is the movable flaps in the center of the top of the structure which can be opened so that you can have a fire in the center of the floor.

Without the extra airflow provided by the open flaps, you would risk a dangerous build-up of carbon monoxide if you lit a fire inside.

Tipis, the tapering cylindrical tent of some North American Indians, have a unique appearance and lots of eye appeal.

Because of their unique construction, I suggest that you try to find some feedback from people that have actually camped in one before you do so yourself. Or, you might book a few days in one at a commercial site before actually buying one. They are a unique experience but they also have special requirements when you transport and set them up.

All of these options have many enthusiastic users. But, I would get as much feedback from people that are already experienced campers before making the major investment that a good tent will require.

Keep Safe while Camping

First Aid Kit: Do you have a first aid kit in your family car? It's a good idea to have one even if you don't go camping.

I have always had a small, commercial kit in my car. When I started camping, we put together a more comprehensive set of supplies.

Since it is always there and I check and refill anything which has been used each month, that's one less thing I have to worry when we have so many things to check on when we are busy preparing for a trip.

Although we like to be as natural as possible in our camping adventures, we always carry a can of bug repellent. The risk is too high of getting bitten and even a single bite could cause a reaction or infection which could require medical attention.

Make sure that you follow the manufacturer's recommendation for frequency of applying the repellent. Some need to be used more often than others to provide a reasonable level of protection.

If you have children under three years old with you on your camping trip, it may not be safe to use most repellents on them. The best alternative is netting for those children. Check with your own Doctor.

Use nets over your sleeping area and on windows, especially in areas where mosquitoes are common.

Older children should be okay with sprays or roll-ons which are approved for use on them. Use less, but apply more often is a good rule. Also, don't let the kids apply their own repellent. They could easily apply too much or get it on sensitive areas such as their eyes.

It is wise to check with authorities in the area or the manager of the site you are going to about any risks which may be a problem during the time you are there.

Clothing: Keep as much of your skin covered as you can so that you avoid sunburn. You can get burned even when you don't think it's very sunny or hot.

A hat with a brim that protects your neck and face is a good idea. It may be a nuisance if you are walking through a wooded area but the protection is worthwhile.

Sanitation: I am including this information because it is very important for your family and also people that use the same areas where you have been camping.

If you can access regular toilets or septic systems, they are obviously the best choice. You still should always be careful and wash your hands thoroughly after use.

Wash your hands with clean, running water and a quality soap where available.

I always carry a quality antibacterial hand cleaning gel which was recommended by my pharmacist. It works without any water which makes it very convenient and means we use less water too. But, the US Park Service advise that you should first wash your hands with untreated water before using the sanitizer. They recommend the sanitizer should contain at least 62% Ethyl alcohol.

If you are in an area with no toilet, be sure to dispose of your human waste by burying it at least ten inches deep and at least seventy yards from any running water.

If you are in a National Park, you must take your human waste with you or dispose of it in an approved facility.

Water Safety

Please check the links in the Resources Chapter for information about taking precautions with water that you intend to drink.

Water is essential for our existence and great for having fun.

But, many unnecessary tragedies occur in water every year. The risks are probably higher when everybody is in a holiday mood.

Water in streams and other places may look inviting and safe to drink but looks can be deceiving, even deadly.

Never leave children of any age near any sort of water without a capable and alert older person watching them.

Many people are unaware that people, especially children, can drown in very small amounts of water, probably less than two inches.

Another hazard with water in lakes and other areas is that we can't always be sure of what is under the water.

Some people have been killed and others suffer crippling injuries when they have dived into water and hit an unseen object under the surface.

Sometimes, they misjudge the depth of the water and hit the bottom.

There are also the dangers of currents being stronger than the swimmer and aggressive creatures which can be hard to see in some conditions.

I don't want you to avoid having some fun in the water whenever the opportunity arises.

Just, please be careful.

Never go into a body of water alone, especially if you are not familiar with the area.

Camping with Children



Camping with your children is a great way to give them some important life lessons while everyone has some fun and starts to build a store of unique family memories.

This section will remind you of some factors which you have to prepare for and others which everyone should keep in mind throughout the trip.

Camping with a toddler means that a parent will have to carry that child as well as a backpack during any hikes.

I know that many people take very young children on some of their camping trips (even in canoes!), and I have suggestions which some of them have shared with me.

My preference is to go only to sites where there are reasonable facilities and access to medical assistance while the kids are very young. This will help to ensure that you all have only good memories of each trip.

This early enjoyable experience will ensure that they want to join you on your back-country adventures when all the children are big and strong enough to participate and enjoy all aspects of the trip.

Young Children and Toddlers

You are the only person that can decide when your children are old enough to enjoy a camping trip with you.

One problem is used diapers and their contents. If you are in an area where there are no suitable facilities for disposal, you should pack them out to minimize harm to the area. The only solution I can suggest is a large and secure wet pack which can be disposed of appropriately when you return.

Make sure that this pack is kept separately from any items which might be contaminated.

You will have to carry extra sets of clothes for the very young children and some changes of bedding.

You will obviously need to be extra alert when the kids are along. They can easily (too easily), wander off to investigate something bright, shiny, sticky or dangerous or all four.

The other ever-present danger is with children that are at the stage where they investigate everything by putting it in their mouth.

The secret to keep the children enthusiastic is to involve them as much as you can in the experience.

You can let them walk rather than carry them all the time. Of course, that



will slow you down but that's okay because the time with the children actively exploring the area and sharing their discoveries with you will be wonderful memories later on.

Let them take a couple of fallen leaves or similar items back with them. Pack some blank paper and crayons and show them how to transfer the pattern from the leaves to the paper. That paper has a much greater chance of surviving the trip home than the leaf would, so they will have a memento of the trip which they made themselves!

Let your older children have as much responsibility as they want but try to think of ways that all but the toddlers can also help.

Keeping Kids Amused

Don't forget the toys, books and games. These will probably be less used than at home but there are going to be times when they want them.

You will be glad to have them handy when you are traveling to or from the camp by car.

You won't avoid the classic cry from bored youngsters, "are we there yet?" but the presence of loved fun items will help reduce the frequency of that cry. If you can pack a couple of small, new items, it can increase the length of time where they will remain interested.

Always take a couple of balls for a quick game of football. If you take just one, it will almost certainly become lost or damaged early in the trip.

A cheap digital camera will let the child create their own record of the trip. Don't forget extra sets of batteries and a good bag for protecting the camera. If possible each child should have their own camera.

Get the child to create a scrapbook with drawings of what they see on the trip. That might include animals, birds, people, insects and plants as well as interesting rock formations and other features. You may see a few creatures in their scrapbook that *you* never saw on the trip.

A good variation is to let them collect samples of dead leaves, interesting rocks etc. These samples could be the basis of a life-long hobby or, at least, a better than average display at their next "Show and Tell" session when they get back to school.

Be careful about the rules in certain areas which prohibit rocks and other items being collected and don't damage or remove living plants. Not only might the plant be a useful source of food or shelter for wildlife, it might be a rare native species.

A friend prepared and printed up a few contest sheets for her children. They were to look for and mark off on the sheet each white horse, black sheep, eagle and other creature or object on their list, She had small prizes for each

of the children and was careful to congratulate each of them for something they did, not just the child that marked off the most items.

If you can take their bicycles and the area is safe, that could make their camp a real adventure. Of course, you will need to be sure to pack the puncture repair kit too!

Take them into the bush with a couple of torches to look for nocturnal animals. Give them glow sticks as their own lights, so that you can be sure to know where they are at all times.

Most kids love to fish and that can be a way to fill a couple of hours when and if they don't feel energetic enough for an exploring session.

If you want some professional pictures for coloring in or for use on your contest sheets or other projects, check the publications from Dover Publications in the resource section of this ebook. (I don't have any connection with the company except as a customer).

Campers and Wildlife



A feature of any camping trip is the local wildlife which we see. It was a great thrill before and is even better now, while we still have the kids with us to share the experiences.

We hope this gentle interaction will encourage the kids to respect the needs of the wonderful creatures which share our country.

As well as the wildlife, we encourage them to look for tracks, nests and other evidence of the harder to find creatures – yes, including their droppings.

I suggest that you buy a field manual about the wildlife in the area you are visiting. I always check government sites first as some others may have false information based on opinion or bias.

But, we also ask the locals we meet when we buy our lunch or supplies at local stores.

It's important to remember that wildlife are **wild** – quite different to pets or the cartoon creatures in childrens' books and other media.

They can scratch, bite and sometimes even kill. That sort of thing often only happens because a human being is not respectful of their way of surviving.

For instance, approaching a wild animal should be avoided where possible. There is no way for them to know whether you are harmless or not – smiling can be a form of challenge with some animals. Some will have had bad experiences with other humans and have no way to know that you may be any different.

If you get too close and, especially if they have no easy way of getting away from your attentions, most will protect themselves.

Just as you probably would, if positions were reversed.



The danger to you or your family would increase if the animal is eating – they may think you're going to take the first food they've had all day.



There is another reason they might be ready to attack.

And, I know I would be in similar circumstances.

Any mother will protect their children!

Don't sneak around, make a little noise so nervous animals can escape before being confronted by you.

If you meet a bear, the advice I got from a local (I cannot guarantee it, of course) was to stop, starting backing away without taking your eyes off the bear and speak calmly and steadily.

I don't think I could keep my voice "calm and steady". but I'd give it a good try. The guide said that running could be a serious mistake. The bear might be almost as fast and it would know the area much better than you.

If you come upon a dead animal, it's probably a good idea to get clear because there could be a larger live animal in the area that wants it and might see you as a rival.

Never feed any wildlife. That could cause them serious illness because they're not used to the processed food, additives and other benefits we get in our daily diet.

It also encourages them to stay near you, a constant source of more trouble.

This could be a death sentence for the animal and any younger ones it is getting food for. If it starts bothering other people, the Wildlife Authorities will have to catch and either relocate or kill it.

It is unlikely that there will be anything done for any youngsters it was feeding because it would be too hard to try to find and rescue them.

So, a simple well-meant act could cause several useless deaths among a very limited population.

Don't store food in your sleeping area. Keep everything in tightly sealed, strong containers and don't throw any scraps around.

Don't go into dark areas at dawn or dusk because they are prime hunting times.

Dispose of your waste thoroughly. Never leave or bury any within seventy yards of natural water sources. Some areas require you take your waste to a proper disposal facility.

The rules are there to protect you as well as the wildlife and environment.

Focusing on having minimum impact will help to preserve the area for re-use by others, including future generations.

Your Checklist

Each person will probably have a different idea of what they regard are the essentials for ensuring a good camping trip. This list is only intended as a start to be amended to your personal and family needs.

Tent (or tents if you are going to have the children in their own).

Energy snacks. I don't think they are very nutritious but they are a handy appetite suppressor when you are doing a long walk where there are no candy stores.

Ready to heat meals. You can take supermarket heat and eat packs but I think they are mostly too small and light on real nutrition. It won't take long to chop a few vegetables and wrap them in foil. Either add some seasoning to each pack when you prepare them or put seasoning packs with your communal camping gear.

Keep them in the refrigerator ready for your next trip. If you have to put off a trip, they can be the basis of quality TV dinners when you don't want to cook.

Just remember to put together some replacement packs and put them in the fridge in the next couple of days.

Pancake batter is another quick and highly appropriate item.

Top Tips

Cold Meals: Make sure that you bring some meals which don't need to be heated before eating. In almost any area, there can be times when it may be too wet or windy to cook over your fire. Even if you have a stove, a cold meal can be a nice change and will give you a rest from some of the usual preparation and cleaning up chores.

Plan your trip to the site so that you get to your destination in daylight. At a minimum, you will have to set up your own camp, feed everybody, and check the surroundings. Trying to do that as it starts to get dark and you are all feeling the effects of your trip, is not the way to start a fun camping trip.

Luminous glow sticks. If your children want to use the glow sticks while they tell ghost stories, don't let them use those which you might need in an emergency. Flashlights are good but also include a couple of **luminous glow sticks** for use if the flashlights are damaged, or just don't work.

Scouting the Area

Local tourism services and sports clubs will probably have recommendations. Your local camping stores will probably have information from operators of the facilities in various areas. Some of their staff may have personal knowledge which can be even more useful because it is likely to be unbiased.

Local sporting and other groups will probably have some information about areas which members have visited. Feedback about particular locations and the facilities available could help you a lot.

The state of some roads may be quite different from what they were when a friend or even a regular camper last visited that area.



Many people have found that a road believed to be safe has been damaged to such an extent that their vehicle either cannot cope with it or is damaged so it cannot

continue.

It might only take one storm to change a smooth country road to an obstacle course.

Check the date on maps which are available for the area. Government maps may be updated less frequently than commercial versions. So, the extra expense involved in buying them may be worthwhile if they have newer information.

Licenses and Permits



It's essential that you check about any Licenses and Permits which you may need for your trip and the activities which you want to do.

As well as fees for entering and using facilities, you may need permits to bring pets into some areas or for other reasons.

As well, you may find there are restrictions or bans on

some things which you may not have thought would be restricted.

An example is transporting firewood: some areas restrict or ban that unless the wood has been specially treated to ensure that it does not have any pests which could affect local vegetation or wildlife.

As well as causing problems for them, you may face severe fines and other penalties - not knowing the rules is never a sufficient defense.

Resources

In every country and most States or counties, there are government departments responsible for maintaining and protecting public resources such as national parks and reserves.

They also control and can supply information about multi-use areas which are farmed or harvested but may also be suitable for camping or other outdoor activities.

Drinking water Safety

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/travel> The site has a lot of other information which might be useful as well.

http://www.nps.gov/public_health/info/factsheets/fs_bc.htm This back country fact sheet shows the requirements under U.S.A. National Park Service rules for maintaining public health standards in back country.

USA

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/>

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service is focused on conserving the natural resources (fish and Wildlife) in the U.S.A. The site has much information which could be useful to campers.

New York Department of Environmental Conservation

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/>

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/> Outdoor activities.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/63.html> Licenses and Permits

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/23.html> Animals and Plants

Dover Publications

www.doverpublications.com

This publisher, whose books are generally low-cost and available world-wide, produces lots of books covering all sorts of subjects including crafts, wildlife, all sorts of hobbies and too many more to list..

If you join their newsletter, you will get information about some of their new books and also links where you can download sample pages from some of their books.

Many of these samples, like the material in the books, could be given to your children when you are traveling to or from a camp or at the camp itself.

There are lots of coloring pages and instructions for simple crafts.

United Kingdom

U.K. Campsite

<http://www.ukcampsite.co.uk/>

An online commercial directory with information and reviews of campsite around the United Kingdom.

Camping in the United Kingdom's National Parks

<http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/visiting/camping.htm>

A guide to the National Parks in the United Kingdom and details of the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) which controls them.

Tracey Talking

Thank you for buying my camping ebook.

I hope that my suggestions will help you to make a great success of your next camping trip and all those you have in the future.

I hope that you are not too concerned about the number and scope of the warnings in the book. I wanted to share my enthusiasm for camping in its various forms but I felt that it would be dishonest and possibly even dangerous if I avoided mentioning some of the potential risks.

You can always limit the level of risk which you might encounter by careful preparation; part of that is getting some reliable knowledge.

That is why I wrote this book.

I hope that we might meet on a trail somewhere.

I wish you great enjoyment and wonderful memories from your camping adventures.

Tracey Warren

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