

Outdoor Skills Challenge Activity

Camping

Learn the skills you need for a camping trip - roll a sleeping bag, use a compression sack, practice pitching a tent, and make an emergency shelter.

By completing the level-appropriate activities in this guide (see chart below), you'll earn your Camping Rocker!

Earn this
rocker this
month!



CAMPING	Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador
Folding a Blanket	●	●				
Rolling a Sleeping Bag		●	●			
Using a Compression Sack & Packing			●	●		
Pitching a Tent				●	●	
Choosing Tent Site					●	●
Making a Shelter						●

Camping

Folding a Blanket D B

MATERIALS

Blankets

Duffle bags

OBJECTIVE

Girl Scouts will be able to fold a blanket.

Skill (Activity One):

1. Choose two Girl Scouts to demonstrate how to fold a blanket. Help them be successful.
2. Have each Girl Scout get a partner.
3. Give each partner group a blanket. Have them fold it.
4. Now have them try to fit it into a duffle bag. If it fits, great! If not, have them refold it to try to make it smaller to fit.

Relay (Activity Two):

1. Split the partners into two teams.
2. Put a pile of blankets in one corner, duffle bags in a second corner, and the groups in a third corner.
3. Put one Girl Scout from each team at the pile of blankets.
4. When the leader says go, have the next person on each team join the first person, they fold the blanket together.
5. The first person then carries the blanket to the duffle bag and puts it in.
6. The second person stays at the pile of blankets.
7. After putting the blanket in the duffle bag, they go back to the line where their team is.
8. As they crosses the line the next person goes and joins the person at the blankets and helps fold a blanket. And so forth and so on.
9. The first person should need to help the last person fold a blanket. After the last person places their blanket in the duffle bag, they races back to the start line. The group is finished once they have crossed the line.

Camping

Rolling a Sleeping Bag **B** **J**

MATERIALS

Sleeping Bags

OBJECTIVE

Girl Scouts will be able to roll a sleeping bag.

Skill (Activity One):

1. Demonstrate how to roll a sleeping bag.
 - a. First fold the sleeping bag in half long-ways.
 - b. Start at the end with an opening and make a tight roll.
 - c. Keep pressure on the roll as you continue to roll until it is completely rolled.
 - d. Depending on type of sleeping bag there should be bungee straps, rope straps, or something similar to fasten the sleeping bag.
2. Have Girl Scouts each take turns trying to roll the sleeping bag. Give each Girl Scout a couple of tries.

Did You Know?
Sleeping bags have temperature ratings. A bag you use for an indoor slumber party might not keep you warm when sleeping outside in the fall or spring.

Relay (Activity Two):

1. Split the Girl Scouts into two teams and have one sleeping bag for each team.
2. Put a marker at the opposite end of the room.
3. Have the first Girl Scout carry the sleeping bag down to the marker, unroll the sleeping bag and reroll the sleeping bag.
4. They have to carry the rolled sleeping bag back to the next Girl Scout in line.
5. If the sleeping bag becomes unrolled, the Girl Scout must go back to the marker and reroll the sleeping bag.
6. When the first Girl Scout gets the sleeping bag to the line, they hand it off to the second Girl Scout, who goes through the same process.
7. The team is done when the sleeping bag is successfully rolled by the last person in line and handed off to the first person in line.

Camping

Using a Compression Sack J C

MATERIALS

Sleeping bag
Compression sacks
Clothes
Measuring tape

OBJECTIVE

Girl Scouts will be able to successfully use a compression sack.

Investing in a compression sack is helpful if you plan to go on a backpacking or overnight kayaking trip.

Sleeping Bag (Activity One):

1. Explain to Girl Scouts that sometimes you don't roll a sleeping bag, instead you stuff it in a stuff sack. And sometimes there is a fancy stuff sack, called a compression sack.
2. Explain that a compression sack takes a lot of the air in between the fibers away, making it smaller and easier to pack.
3. Have the Girl Scouts stuff a sleeping bag into a compression sack. Then have them measure it, before compressing.
4. Now have the Girl Scouts compress the sleeping bag. Tell them to work the straps little by little, there is no advantage to pulling one strap all the way tight first. They will pull each strap multiple times.
5. After they have pulled the straps as tight as they can, measure it again.
6. Compare the numbers and show how it got smaller.

Clothes (Activity Two):

1. Now let's try it with something different. This time, have the Girl Scouts put clothes in the sack.
2. Let them explore the differences in rolling the clothing before placing in the sack, folding it, or just stuffing it.
3. Again, have them compress the sack and see how it works.



Example of a compression sack.

Camping

Pitching a Tent **C** **S**

MATERIALS

Tents

Ground cloths

OBJECTIVE

Girl Scouts will be able to pitch a tent. There are many different types of tents, but the most commonly used are dome and a-frame.

Dome Tents:

1. Start by setting out your ground cloth, so that your tent will entirely cover the cloth. If needed, fold it under itself to make it smaller.
2. There are generally two to three poles that support the main tent. Assemble the poles.
3. Attach the poles to the tent, usually under either long tubular strips, or multiple smaller loops.
4. Pop the tent up, by putting the ends of the poles into the slots in the corners of the tent.
5. Stake the corners, by first putting in one corner, then going diagonally to the opposite corner, pulling taught. Stake all four corners, pulling taught each time.
6. Then attach the last pole to the rain fly. Put the fly on top of the tent and attach to the tent, usually by small clips.
7. Stake the fly, again pulling taught.

Reading the directions of tent set up and practicing at home can reduce stress out on the trail when setting up camp.



Example of 2 person dome tent.



Example of 6 person dome tent.

Continued on next page

A-Frame Tents:

1. Start by setting out your ground cloth, so that your tent will entirely cover the cloth. If needed, fold it under itself to make it smaller.
2. There are five poles that support the main tent. Assemble the poles.
3. Each end uses two poles that have one tapered and one non-tapered end, and a junction tube. Insert the tapered ends to the junction tube on the bottom. The bottom has the holes wider apart.
4. Do this again for the other end.
5. Now attach the ridge pole. Have the ridge pole connected, except one link. Put one end through the hole on the higher end of the junction tube. Place the remaining link of the pole in the same hole on the opposite junction tube. Attach the poles to make one ridge pole.
6. Attach the non-tapered end of the poles to the corners of the tent.
7. Bring the elastic band on the top corner up to the closest junction tube. Bring it underneath the tube and around the edges of the junction tube.
8. Repeat on the other end.
9. Stake the corners, by first putting in one corner, then going diagonally to the opposite corner, pulling taught. Stake all four corners, pulling taught each time.
10. Attach the single small poles to the end of the ridge pole that stick out through the junction tube.
11. Attach the elastic band on the rain fly to the end of the pole and repeat on the opposite end.
12. Attach the fly with clasps to the tent.
13. Stake the fly, pulling taught.

Depending on your skill level, it might take up to four people to set up a large tent.



Example of 2 person A-frame tent.



Example of 6 person A-frame tent.

Camping

Choosing a Tent Site S A

OBJECTIVE

Girl Scouts will be able to identify what makes a good tent site.

Discussion (Activity One):

1. Discuss what elements are important to take into consideration when choosing a campsite and discuss some considerations for each. Answers should include:

Legalities

- Are permits needed?
- Is there a specific group size allowed?
- Are we allowed to camp on the side of the trail or do we have to find an established campsite?

Safety

- Make sure there are no dead trees or branches overhead.
- Make sure there is not a loose rock ledge above the potential site.
- Make sure you are not under a lone tree, as that is an attractant to lightning.
- Make sure you are not in an animal's direct habitat, or heavily traveled animal trail.
- Make sure you are not about to sleep on fragile vegetation.
- Make sure you are 200 feet from water sources.
- Make sure you are out of a flash flood zone.
- If wind is in the forecast, look for a windbreak, like a big boulder or stand of trees.
- Make sure your site is off the trail.

Comfort

- Existing sites are well established and generally means that comfort is higher than other places in the area.
- Try not to set up in the bottom of a valley, as it is generally cold and humid there.
- Find a flat space - after all you don't want to roll over each other at night.
- Find shade, it is much more comfortable to nap and sleep in your tent without the sun beaming right on you.
- Make sure the area is clear of stones, roots, and broken branches, as they are not comfortable to sleep on.
- Finding an area that has a natural covering, like leaves, pine needles, sand, or moss will be most comfortable.
- Find an area big enough for your group and the activities planned. Don't settle for something that doesn't suit your needs unless nightfall is upon you.

Explore Site (Activity Two):

1. Have the Girl Scouts walk around outside and discuss different areas and what would make an area a good campsite and what would make it a bad campsite. Discuss what categories each aspect fits into.

Choosing a Tent Site



Example of acceptable campsite: Flat clearing, shade, 200 ft from water.



Example of unacceptable campsite: High altitude and no tree cover.



Example of an unacceptable campsite: Sloped land, large rocks and logs on the site.



Example of acceptable campsite: Established with a fire pit, flat clearing, shade, 200 ft from water.

Photo by NPS.

Camping

Making a Shelter **A**

MATERIALS

Sticks of various sizes

Debris such as leaves, moss, flat rocks, etc.

OBJECTIVE

Girl Scouts will be able to construct a basic debris shelter.

Activity:

1. Discuss when and why a shelter may be needed in an emergency situation. Answers could include:
 - If someone gets hurt while they are far away from the camping site
 - Protection from weather elements such as wind, rain, snow, and sun
 - When you want don't want the weight of a tent to carry on a trip
2. Have the Girl Scouts decide if they are pairing up or building a shelter on their own.
3. Start by propping a large stick on a stump, or sturdy branch.
4. Next lean sturdy sticks on the large stick from both sides. This creates a tent like structure.
5. Now add debris, to cover the gaps in the shelter.
6. The shelter should be big enough for the intended user.

