

# Ten Summer Camping Tips



It's time to get out under the stars  
- are you ready for anything?



1. **Salt to Taste.** Spice up meals on the trail or in camp with the little condiment packages from restaurants containing salt, pepper, ketchup, soy sauce or lemon juice. They're free, easy to find and very convenient for backpacking.
2. **The Red Green Quick Fix.** Always take along a small roll of duct tape. It's a short-term fix for most fabric rips as well as tears in a tent's mosquito netting. Ripped mosquito netting can also be repaired quickly by joining both sides of the tear with a waterproof sealant. It dries fast and is amazingly strong.
3. **Stop the itch.** Always carry a 35mm canister of baking soda. Add water to make soothing paste for insect bites, or sprinkle it in your sleeping bag, boots or pack to absorb odours. It can also be used as deodorant or toothpaste.
4. **Battery Power.** Put a fat rubber band around your flashlight near the on/off switch to keep it from being accidentally turned on while in your duffel bag. Also, it never hurts to bring extra batteries.
5. **Sleep Well.** To avoid slipping down on your sleeping pad when camped on uneven ground, try placing a wool shirt between the pad and the bag, putting your backpack at the foot of the pad, or placing the pad inside your sleeping bag.
6. **Stay Dry.** In small tents, the foot of the sleeping bag often rubs against the tent walls and gets wet. To keep it dry, try placing a garbage bag over it.
7. **Zip Tip.** Use glow-in-the-dark shoelaces (often used on children's shoes) as zipper pulls for sleeping bags, packs, duffel bags or anything else you need to find in the dark.
8. **Eat Smart.** As an alternative to raisins and other dried fruit, try putting a few bagels in your day or lunch pack. They keep well, pack well, taste good, fill you up and are loaded with energy-giving carbohydrates.
9. **Rope Trick.** Always carry a spare length of nylon parachute cord. It can almost always be used by someone in camp as an impromptu clothesline, or to help tie down tents or other gear.
10. **Keep Cool.** Putting a canteen or water bottle in a wet wool sock can help keep it cooler in the summer. Using a dry sock and putting it in your pack can keep it from freezing in winter.

- Guy Mandeville is Area Commissioner, Halifax Region.

## Quick Tips for Summer Activities (all sections!)

- ☞ Two mile hike (certificate for Cubs upon completion) - change the length of the hike to suit other sections. You might have activities or challenges for each 1/4 mile.

- ☞ Fireworks on a beach at the summer camp (over the water is really neat).
- ☞ Survivor camp theme with torch lit ceremonies at nighttime (citronella lamps work well).
- ☞ Outdoor Woodsmen Challenge Camp (invite three troops and award a trophy to the troop who wins).
- ☞ Build and fly stunt kites. Fly them in a park.
- ☞ Tour a dinosaur museum and do a fossil hunt.
- ☞ Have a wet, wild, and wonderful weekend camp full of water activities like water balloon launchers, pop-bottle launchers, water polo, canoeing, fly fishing, rope course.
- ☞ Make 'kick the can' ice-cream (<http://www.funology.com/inthekitchen/kit017.cfm>).
- ☞ Make ice cream in a bag.
- ☞ Have a campfire cook off as an annual camp.
- ☞ Have the youth participate in a "crest-design" and reproduce the most popular or best designed crest to mark the past year of Scouting (collectors' item).
- ☞ Do a rugged hiking- camping expedition over 4-5 days (choose a popular or well-known hiking area).
- ☞ Pool party & BBQ at leader's place.
- ☞ Head out to a dude ranch where you can do horsebacking, mountain biking.
- ☞ Rapelling with the Search and Rescue (Invite another group whom has never tried this before).
- ☞ Bat Caving and/or Spelunking at a remote bat cave (visit an underground lake).
- ☞ Head to a university astronomy tower or have someone bring in some telescopes to observe near and far away stars at nighttime.
- ☞ Do a photo-scavenger hunt or downtown scavenger hunt.
- ☞ A sundae competition - You need lots of ice cream, disposable cups, spoons, flavoured toppings, nuts, chocolate buds, jelly babies, and other bits and pieces. The biggest, most original, most artistic, most delicious. The winner gets to eat their creation. So do the others.
- ☞ Visit the zoo - Check for twilight sessions in summer.
- ☞ Marble tournament (use a round robin challenge format and invite another group to compete).
- ☞ Invite a magician into your last meeting to do a trick to end the year off with a bang.
- ☞ Coordinate a volleyball tournament with another Scouting group(s).
- ☞ A Mountain Bike Rodeo (Most RCMP barracks offer this program). ^

- Jeff Melvin is a leader with 5th Riverview Cubs, Moncton, NB