

### **Packing List for Mild Weather Car Camping**

always check weather forecast before camping with your family

#### **Camping and outdoor gear – We keep a large rubbermaid bin full of these items stored in our garage so that it is ready to go when we are**

sunscreen

bug repellent

matches

water bottles – one for each family member

headlamps for everyone in your family or flashlights if not headlamps

spare batteries for headlamps or flashlights

lantern (if you have one or feel you need one particularly for cooking or setting up in the dark)

paper towels or shop towels

baby wipes (to remove marshmallows or mud)

toilet paper (in case campsite is out or toilet is absent)

trash bags/ziplock bags – I like to keep a gallon ziplock full of other ziplock sizes and several trash bags)

remember to hang trash high in a tree or lock it into your car so that animals do not spread it all over your campsite

do not EVER have food in your tent (everything from bugs to bears will join you in your tent for a snack)

pocket knife for adult use – for kids ONLY after they have completed a knife safety course!

tent – I recommend a 6 man tent for a family of 4 – you can rent tents from REI if you prefer

rain fly (If you are buying a tent, be sure your rain fly goes ALL the way down to the ground)

footprint or tarp for under your tent to keep the tent dry and prevent holes caused by burrs and rocks

stakes

rubber mallet to drive stakes in on hard ground (optional)

sleeping bags – one for each member of the family

pillows for each person

sleeping pads for each person (I recommend Thermarest brand)

extra blankets if cold or sleeping bags are not low temperature rated

towels in case of rain, mud or water play

Chairs – either folding camp chairs or crazy creek style chairs

camp table (optional – if more than picnic table not enough)

table cloth (optional)

camera/batteries/memory card (optional)

nets to collect fish or bugs to look at – always carefully release what you catch

magnifying glass (for kids to look at bugs/leaves/etc up close)

hammock (optional)

rope (for miscellaneous uses)

tarp (to cover cooking or seating area in case of rain – use with rope listed above)

binoculars (kids usually enjoy using binoculars, so bring an inexpensive pair for kids if possible)

Wildlife Identification books if you have them

leave electronics and toys at home to maximize outdoor fun and learning while you are camping – limit adult screen time as much as possible as well

#### **cooking gear**

grill or camp stove (only 2-3 families per group need one if camping with others)

fuel for stove and lantern (if needed)

water (if camping in sites without water or if camp area has flooded recently)

skillet/pot/griddle if needed for your meal

cups/plates/bowls/utensils – one for each person in your family

cooking knife for adult use – appropriate for what you plan to cook

hot dog/marshmellow skewers for cooking over fire  
any other items required for the meals you plan to make  
coffee pot (optional) french press or instant work well camping

**personal items**

lights to see kids at night (REI and Academy sell lights to tie onto kids that have replaceable batteries to use instead of glow sticks which are an environmental hazard)  
toiletries for each person  
face towel or bandana for drying faces or hands or for tying back hair in wind (optional but I find useful)

**clothing**

raincoats/fleece/coats if needed for weather – remember it will be colder at night and the weather can change unexpectedly  
sturdy shoes – 2 pairs in case one gets wet – I do not recommend wearing flip flops while camping  
water shoes – if camping area has water to get into – again, avoid flip flops on uneven ground  
weather appropriate clothing for each person in your family for each day you will be out of your house  
swimsuits (optional)  
sweaters (if needed for weather especially at night)  
extra clothing – clothes almost always get wet or muddy while camping – always bring extras  
Hats – for sun or cold as needed

**first aid kit and personal first aid items – be sure you take with you when hiking any distance**

any medications that any member of your family takes regularly  
motrin (including dose type for the current ages of your children)  
liquid benadryl (works fastest in the event of an emergency allergic reaction)  
benadryl or cortisone cream for rashes or insect bites  
antiseptic or alcohol wipes/spray for cuts  
bandaids in various sizes including knee size and butterfly style  
antibiotic type cream such as polysporin  
tweezers  
small scissors  
first aid tape  
gauze pads  
ace bandage wrap  
latex gloves  
first aid booklet with first aid procedures and directions including section on bites and stings  
moleskin or 2<sup>nd</sup> skin for blisters while hiking  
instant ice pack (optional)  
poison ivy wash if you are particularly sensitive to the plant  
not all of these items need to be in a kit that you hike with, but the basic first aid and allergy items do.

**food**

Snacks – hungry campers are grumpy campers – you may be surprised by how much kids eat when they spend all day outside  
all items needed for the meals you plan to make while camping  
meals while camping can range from simple (hot dogs and s'mores) to complex (pizza baked over the fire)  
there are many camping cookbooks on the market, or you can make food (such as chili) at home, carry it in a cooler, and simply heat it up at your campsite