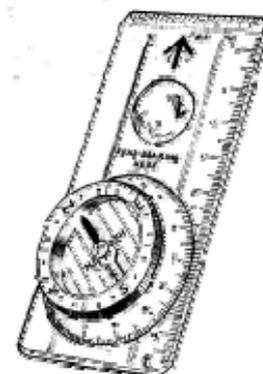


101 Tips & Techniques...

...About Expeditions...

1. **Wear 2 pairs of socks**
The best is a thin cotton/polyester pair next the skin, and thick woollen on the outside. The thin socks will stick to your feet, and the thick ones to your boots, any friction will be between the two pairs of socks and not to your feet so the heat can't build up and blisters won't form.
Make sure that they are not too tight or it will restrict blood circulation and you could get frost bite in cold weather.
2. **Put talc on you feet**
This will absorb some of the sweat and stop your feet from softening up or getting too hot, reducing the chances of a blister.
3. **Rub Meths in your feet**
Some people swear that rubbing a little meths or surgical spirit into your feet for several days before a hike will harden the skin, making it more difficult for blisters to form.
4. **Rub Vaseline in your feet**
Sounds revolting but it works, it reduces the friction between your feet and socks so blisters won't form, however this is will wear off over a long hike and is only really useful in an emergency.
5. **Learn to treat blisters**
If you do get one know how to treat it. Check your first aid manual for this as it changes from year to year.
6. **Clean and proof your boots every time you use them**
Just walking down the road will wear off the proofing. If they are leather then polish them, or for man-made fibres check the manufacturers instructions or use Scotchguard.
7. **Do not EVER dry leather boots near a fire or hot stove**
If you do the leather will harden, warp and maybe crack which will make them uncomfortable and leak.
8. **Stuff wet boots/shoes with newspaper overnight to dry them out**
In a emergency you can use toilet roll or dirty clothes.
9. **Don't wear Jeans or Denim**
Denim holds water and takes ages to dry, if the weather is bad you will stay wet, get colder and colder and eventually you could die from hypothermia.
10. **Put your waterproofs on as soon as it starts to rain**
Putting waterproofs over damp clothes will keep the damp in long after it stops raining.
11. **Get a good fleece**
They allow your sweat to pass out but will keep you dry and warm. As you get more experienced find out about how they work and how to get the best out of them.
12. **Recognise Hypothermia and learn to treat it**
Check the current fist aid manual.



13. Co-ordinate compasses
Sounds silly, but make sure they all point in the same direction.
14. Don't take a big bar of soap
cut it down, or raid the bathroom for one of the little bars you get free in hotels. Similarly take an almost empty tube of toothpaste.
15. Artificial chamois 'leathers' make a good lightweight towel for hiking
Purpose-made green ones can be bought from 'outdoor' shops but cost a lot more
16. Pre mix coffee/dried milk/sugar in plastic bags before the hike
Cuts down container weight, use zip lock baggies and put them in a bin when used up.
17. Don't rely on mobile phones for emergencies
Sometimes they work, sometimes they don't, you won't know where they do work until you go there.
18. Let someone know where you are and when you get there
Always leave a route plan with someone and tell them when you arrive.

...About Camping...

19. Air sleeping bags once a day
Even the best sleeping bags trap your sweat at night and after a few days they start to stink and go mouldy
20. Unless it's raining open up your tent every day.
If its dry roll up the sides but if wet hang them up to dry/air. During the night you will breath out carbon dioxide and water vapour and air borne germs. Opening up the tent makes sure that this is blown out and will make you tent a far more pleasant place to be.
21. Check that you have all the poles, pegs and fittings BEFORE you take a tent out
There may be some missing and you could be miles from home and no way of holding your tent up.
22. Don't eat food in tents
The crumbs encourage ants and rodents, especially squirrels, who will happily chew through your rucsac for food.
23. Don't camp under trees
Water carries on dripping of trees hours after the rain has stopped and the roots will make it difficult to bang in pegs
24. Don't camp near mossy grass
This indicates damp ground and there will be thousands of flying insects
25. Don't pee on the ground near your camp site.
Its unhygienic, attracts insects and will turn your campsite into a stinking fetid swamp
26. No lit lanterns in tents
Includes gas, Tilleys, hurricane lamps etc
27. Don't touch the side of your tent
This will allow water to pass through and it will drip on you. If someone does touch the side and it drips then run your finger down the tent from the drip to the edge and the water will flow away.
28. Wear shoes at all times
Camp sites are not carpeted and have broken tent pegs, bits of glass, snakes, old bits of barbed wire, and sharp stones on them. If you injure your feet you may have to go home.
29. Tie up your tent when you go out
This will dissuade thieves and keep animals out, especially wandering dogs
30. Loosen your guy ropes at night
On tents made from natural fibre loosen the guys a fraction each night as the damp night air can cause

the fabric to shrink. If the guys are too tight then as the tent stretches the pegs will come out. Man-made fibres shouldn't need this.

31. Never play about with someone else's tent
It might seem funny at the time, but messing around with tents or letting them down in the night has caused damage to equipment and caused serious injury. Most leaders will send you home for this.
32. Make sure your ground sheet is inside the tent
Ground sheets outside the tent will catch rain and funnel it onto your sleeping bag
33. Don't take your ground sheet right up to the door
Leave a gap to store your muddy boots by the door so your sleeping bag won't get dirty and you will be able to find them easily
34. Put up your dining shelter on the end of your tent to make an integrated living module
Not necessary during the summer and be aware that if one part catches fire the whole lot will go up.
35. Use a large sheet of plastic or a tarp as a bell end on your tent
This can be used to store your gear on patrol camps when it's not always feasible to have a separate tent. A bell end on a 6 man patrol tent can store all your gear and food.
36. Washing up water goes into the wet drain, and the wet drain is not a rubbish bin
37. Jobs need to be done at camp.
If you are given a job, just do it as well as you can so that you can all get on with the rest of the day
38. Learn to tie ropes to plastic sheets.
Wrap the plastic round a stone like foil round a toffee apple, and twist it. Tie the rope behind that, where the stick would go on the toffee apple and the plastic won't rip. Useful for emergency fly sheets and shelters.
39. Respect other people's camp area
While you are at camp your tent is your home and the area around it should be treated the same so don't go in unless invited. If you do someone will think that you are stealing.
40. Don't run around tents
You will trip over a guy road and crack your head open on a tent peg, not to mention damage the tent.
41. Don't kick the da** football on or in other people's tents!!!!
It's rude, ignorant, it can damage tents and ultimately can get your head kicked in.
42. Don't run through tents
You will damage other people's kit, fall over and hurt your self.
43. Only fill a water carrier with as much as you can carry
If you put too much in you are likely to injure your self or drop the container and split it.

...About Cooking...

44. Rub washing up liquid on the OUTSIDE bottom of billies before using them on an open fire
Alternatively make a paste with washing up liquid and washing powder, and spread on the outside - at the end of the week - it just comes off with all the burnt bits - and for any bits that are burnt the paste acts as a good "abrasive"
45. Add 10% water to meths for using it as Trangia fuel
This makes the flame burn cleaner and cuts down the amount of soot you have to clean off afterwards, however this may be negligible for short hikes

46. Make sure a Trangia is out before adding more fuel
If the flames have just gone out the meths can ignite when poured in so pick the burner unit up before refilling it just to check. This sometimes means you end up waiting a bit longer - which means waiting for the dinner or cuppa, but its better than getting your hand or face burnet off.
47. Learn the different qualities of different stoves
There are times when Gas is best, other times when paraffin or petrol are best. And even times when a Trangia is the best solution :-)
48. Make sure your gas bottles are full before taking them to camp
Gas bottles tell you how much gas is inside but don't normally tell you how much the bottle itself weighs. When you get a new one weigh it on the bathroom scales and write the weight on a sticker or label around the neck. Check this occasionally and when the new weight is almost the same as the original minus the weight of the gas you know the bottle is empty.
49. Don't cook in a hike or patrol tent
It takes about 30secs for an 8 man patrol tent to burn... the stuff in it takes longer to finish off. A nylon hike tent will burn even faster, and even if it is ""Flame retardant"" it will go up in seconds. What's worse is that the burning nylon will drape a layer of burning plastic over everything in the tent, including anyone who happens to be inside.
50. Don't store fuel in a tent, EVER.
Scouts have died from fuel leaking, both gas and meths by being choked by fumes or burnt alive.
51. To clean burnt food off billies
Add some long green lush grass, water, bit of washing up liquid, and heat. When it starts to bubble, burnt stuff will scrape of pretty easily Alternatively don't put washing up liquid in initially and add a large amount of salt, salt is usually the best ingredient for removing stuck grime on the inside of a pan...
52. Scrub a badly burnt frying pan with sand or gravel
But not a non-stick one
53. Measure your mug before camp
Use it for measuring out liquids when cooking.
54. Learn to cook at home before you go to camp
Also understand a little bit about nutrition, that way you won't go hungry at camp and on activities
55. Don't put nuts in emergency rations
If someone does become nut intolerant then a mountain emergency isn't the time or place to find out.
56. Keep food cold in a cool box full of water
Its easier than a bucket, stays cold longer, and you can fill it up in the supermarket
57. Know about the metabolism of chocolate and how much water it requires.
Roughly a half litre per Mars bar.
58. If you are given an axe in a forest by a Scout leader and told to get some fire wood, DO NOT start on the nearest trunk you find!
59. Cylindrical airtight container for loo roll
Wet toilet paper is useless. Plastic bags collect water and get lost, hanging from the tent they get damp and left on the ground they get muddy and damp.

...About Fires...

60. Chop twice as much wood as you think you need
That way you will have enough for the next meal too and will be able to get it started earlier. Cut more wood while the food is cooking.
61. Keep a small bag which you fill with tinder as you walk about during the day
and keep it in your tent at night. Fresh kindling will always be damp in the morning, you will have your fire

alight much quicker if you have dried some out overnight, and can even use it to start a fire with wet wood.

62. Silver Birch bark burns well
Dried silver birch bark when scrapped up into flakes will burn exceptionally well.
63. Split a bigger log to get dry wood.
Most wet wood is dry in the middle, so split it up 4 ways and most of the surface will be dry.
64. Hand axes are for cutting along the grain
i.e. Splitting wood and not for cutting across logs, use a saw for this.
65. Do not throw hand axes
66. Put a plastic sheet over the woodpile at night
This will keep the wood dry, don't use a poly bag water will collect in the bottom and make it wetter.
67. Don't keep your woodpile in your tent
Dead wood attracts insects and they will crawl out during the night and over your kit.
68. You must wear boots when working in the cutting area
If an axe can cut through a branch it isn't going to be stopped by the hair on your toe, ALWAYS wear strong leather boots or shoes in the cutting area, and don't wear anything loose around your neck.
69. Don't put aerosol cans on the fire
They will explode with the force of a small hand grenade, people are regularly killed and injured like this.
70. Don't spray aerosols on an open fire
It will eventually explode and blow off your arm up to the elbow but don't worry about that as you will probably die from the blast, or as a result of your injuries.
71. Don't run around with burning sticks
It's dangerous and will hurt someone, probably you, when it slips down through your hand.
72. Don't wear shell suits near a fire
They burn really nicely and the molten plastic will stick to your body. The best possible outcome is several days in intensive care and scarred for life.
73. Get burns under cold water as soon as possible
Keep them there until the pain stops, and if it still hurts after 15 minutes then go to the hospital, but keep the burn wet and/or cold. Stick your hand in a bucket of cold water for the journey to hospital.

...About Troop Kit...

74. Don't leave tent pegs in the ground
In a few years time they will either crack or rot and leave a sharp spike which could go through someone's boots or hurt an animal
75. Don't try to get pegs out by just hitting them, they will snap off
Carefully hit them backwards and forwards with a mallet then pull them up with a loop of rope, a lever, or another peg as a "T" handle
76. Don't put a tent away when it's still wet
The damp will make the canvas rot and mildew will spread and ruin the tent. If it is wet at the end of camp get it out and dry it as soon as you get home.
77. Don't walk on tents
This will force dirt into the pores and ruin the water proofing

78. Always clean and dry off tent pegs before final packing
Wooden pegs will rot and after a while fail when they are put under pressure, like in a storm when you need them most
79. Carry a spare 6" nail for replacement of spike on patrol tent pole
If the spike comes out or the pole splits the pole can be turned upside down and a nail banged in with a mallet
80. Don't use aerosols (e.g. deodorant) in the tent
Side spray produces instant de-proofing.
81. Do not poke fingers at the mantle of Tilley/Coleman lamps
it ruins them.
82. Don't stand on ropes
It forces dirt into the fibres which acts like sandpaper cutting through them.
83. Use light coloured rope for guy lines
you are more likely to see them in the dark.

...About Personal Kit...

84. Don't let your mother pack your kit
If she does, you'll never get it all back in and you won't know what you have got with you. PLUS she will only pack the things she "knows" you'll need... and not very many of the essential things from the kit list... because she can't see a use for them!
85. Don't carry your sleeping bag in a bin liner
They are biodegradable and designed to melt when wet, leaving you with a damp and miserable nights sleep. Keep your sleeping bag in a tough plastic bag inside a stuff sack. The plastic bag will keep it dry and the stuff sack will protect them both from tears and cuts.
86. Get a roll mat
You lose as much body heat through the ground as through the air, a cheap mat (£10) will keep you warmer and keep your sleeping bag drier if the ground gets damp.
87. NEVER EVER wear that day's clothes to bed
Clothes damp from the day's sweat, rain or evening dew will make for a clammy cold and miserable night. Either keep a separate set of clothes for night time or put on tomorrow's dry clothes.
88. Wear a hat in bed if it's cold
A wool (or fleece) hat will make ALL the difference in keeping you warm at night, and will reduce the body area outside your sleeping bag by 50%
89. Put clothes in a stuff sack as a pillow
Don't take a normal pillow they get damp at night and are a pain to carry. Keep your clothes, not including your uniform, in a stuff sack wrapped inside a jumper and it will be just as good.
90. Keep your clean clothes in plastic bags
Even the best bags and tents can leak, but a plastic bag won't.
91. Keep your dirty clothes in a net bag
That will stop them rotting or going mouldy if they are wet.
92. Take baby wipes to give your hands and face a quick clean
Or better still get a hand full of wipes from KFC and keep them in the pocket of your bag.
93. Keep your face cloth damp in a poly bag
If it gets a good lathering up at the end of each day (and it does, doesn't it?) it smells sweetly all day!
94. Take at least 2 pairs of everything to camp
One lot on and the other drying out.

95. Take a pack of waterproof playing cards and learn some games before you go. This is lighter than a book and can provide entertainment on the occasions you are stuck in the tent.
96. Water activities
Wear yesterday's clothes or the most grotty ones, and always leave a dry set to go home in, which may well be your uniform.
97. Do not use any perfumes, smelly soaps, shampoos or deodorants
If you're camping in an area that is buggy or populated by hordes of mosquitoes, stick to biodegradable soaps with no perfumes. Most insects are drawn to "nice smelling" soaps and perfumes and will make your life miserable.
98. Put your name on everything
Unless you want to end up wearing someone else's underpants or for them to go home with your new torch.
99. Don't use nail varnish to mark your cup
It comes off after the first wash and it doesn't prove it's yours.
100. Don't leave money in your tent
It will fall out or get stolen.
101. Engrave your name on metal with a masonry nail and hammer
Do this in an open area or wear ear plugs, and don't try it on enamel which will flake off and ruin the item.
102. Engrave your name on plastic with a hot pin
Pushed the pin into a stick and hold the head over a candle so you can melt in your name. Some plastic won't melt others you will go straight through.
103. Take the batteries out of any electrical equipment during transport
Especially true of your torch (and electric razor if you can) because if they turn on the batteries will be flat before you get there and a razor can eat its way out of your rucksack
104. Know where your torch is
Check that it works, **before** it gets dark and keep it handy for those 'night time' visits. Tie a length of cord or string to the end so you can find it easier in the dark.
105. Take two torches
This avoids spending ages looking for tiny batteries in a big bag! A small "key-ring torch" tied to the pocket of your rucksack will be easy to find and useful for searching your kit.
106. Have a spare battery and bulb for your torch
Learn how to change them in the pitch dark.. Keep the bulbs wrapped in tissue inside a film canister. Keep batteries in a small poly bag to stop them shorting out.
107. Charge your phone up before camp and turn it off at night
Use a payphone where possible to save the batteries and if you can buy an adaptor that uses dry cells for long camps. If you are going by car get a cigar lighter charger so you can keep it fresh.
108. Take clothes pegs
To stop your tea-towels blowing away on a windy day, they don't dry so well if you tie them around the washing line

About stuff...

109. Learn to tie a reef knot and bowline
These are the two most useful knots you will ever need, learn them early and well.

110. Never assume that Skip does not know what you are up to.
Always let someone know where you are during activities, Skip has no way of knowing if you are stuffing your face down at the providore or floating face down in a pond, unless you tell him first.
111. Bend your knees and not your back when lifting heavy loads
Protect your back