

TRAIL AND CAMP SANITATION

CAMPING LEAVES ITS MARK on boys. Campers leave their imprint on places and people. Fortunately, most Scouts and Explorers are efficient campers. And efficient campers have one sure trait—they *know* and *practice* healthful field sanitation. They *know*, because their adult leaders have taught them; and they *practice*, because these leaders set the example and follow through till the practicing is a habit and a matter of pride.

Experienced leaders place a high priority on proper training in hike and camp sanitation. In using these skills, patrols and Explorer groups learn that teamwork is the key to lighten otherwise arduous jobs. Many hands make light work of camp "housekeeping," especially of those tasks essential for cleanliness and good health.

Take camp cleanup or dishwashing as one example. It can be fun—if it doesn't take too long. Otherwise it will be unpopular and a sorry job, never done well. So make it a challenge (as explained later) instead of a chore.

The principal elements of camp sanitation are personal cleanliness; safe drinking water; food care and preparation; dishwashing; disposal of waste water, garbage, and ash, and latrines.



Personal cleanliness

Even on a hike or camping trip boys can be clean when it counts. Soap and water scrubbing is particularly important before cooking, handling of eating utensils, eating, and after using toilet facilities.

A lightweight plastic or canvas washbasin should be standard personal equipment for every camper. The only time one may not be needed is when a permanent campsite has washing facilities. Even there, cooks should improvise means for an occasional hand wash or rinse right in the "kitchen," as the need arises during preparation of a meal.

When a group camps along a running stream or a lake, soap washing should never be done there. This causes water pollution. A quick dip to rinse off the trail dust after a hard day's hike or a short, supervised swim—fine. But this is not the place for soap bathing. Bathe regularly—everyday if possible. Showers are usually provided at established council, public, and private camps. In a temporary camp, set up and use an improvised method for bathing.

A blanket airing pole or line is a real asset to your camp. Dry, aired-out blankets or sleeping bags give a warm night's sleep. Clammy, musty blankets are a small comfort. Turn your bedding inside out and air it daily, weather permitting.



Safe drinking water

An adequate and convenient supply of safe drinking water is necessary for a successful camp or hike. You must either know the water to be safe or take the necessary steps to make it safe to drink. If you are not sure, check with someone who knows the area—a park ranger or conservation officer, for example.

All water should be considered unsafe for drinking, unless it comes from a recognized or tested water system. Clear, sparkling appearance is no guarantee of a water's being safe for drinking; you can't be sure unless the water has been tested recently. Well water from farms or isolated dwellings may be perfectly acceptable to the residents who have built up an immunity to its impurities, but it may be unsafe for you.

If there is any question, boil water used for drinking or treat it with water-purification tablets to be sure. A bottle of 50 water-purification tablets is standard in the official BSA Troop First Aid Pouch. If you use the boiling method, bring the water to a rolling boil and keep it there for 5 minutes. Then aerate it by pouring from one container to another to improve the taste. Always go prepared to purify water, even if it appears you may not need to do so.

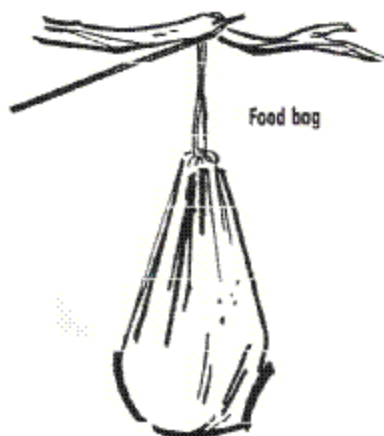
Besides being sure of a safe water supply, you must also see that it is stored only in safe containers. At an undeveloped site you may have to pack in your own water. Bring it in the type of containers shown on the right.



Collapsible water jug



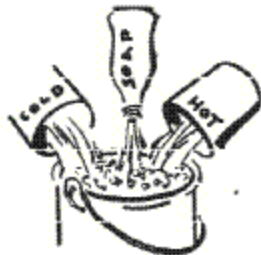
"... Avoid foods needing refrigeration"



FOR CLEANUP SCOUTS



1. Boil full pot of water. Use some for washing and rest for rinsing.



2. Mix part of boiling water with liquid soap and cold water for washing.



3. Add sterilizing agent to the remaining hot water for rinse water.



4. While other Scouts wash their utensils cleanup Scouts clean cooking pots.

Food handlers and storage

The personal cleanliness of food handlers is a must. Cooking buddies should always wash their hands before starting meal preparation and during cooking if their hands become soiled. Always wash hands after using the latrine.

Prevent food contamination. Protect foods from dirt, water, tainting from soap, oils, and odoriferous foods such as onions, garlic, oranges, melons, and cucumbers. Seal all such foods in plastic or foil. Never save leftovers which need refrigeration for a later meal because they may become poisonous. Eat it up or throw it out!

Avoid using foods needing refrigeration, except when camping at a permanent site that has refrigeration. Substitute nonperishable foods. If you do use perishable foods, buy them as late as possible before departure and use them up quickly. Poultry and fresh meat may have to be repacked, even for refrigerator storage. Foods that are frozen solid when taken out of refrigeration will retain their freshness and safety for a longer time.

Animal and insect foragers can be problems. Avoid feeding them—intentionally or accidentally. Chances are, they will be sniffing around soon enough. Don't encourage them. A clean camp is your best protection against unwanted animal and insect guests.

Unless you want your camp-out cut short, better make sure that your edibles are hung up out of the reach of animals. In a more permanent camp, a solid food box is a good idea. Styrofoam ice chests are not strong enough for protection. They can be easily torn apart by a hungry animal.

Keep all food—including cooky and candy snacks—out of your tent and pack. Canvas tents and sleeping bags are no barrier to bears, who love sweets, as do raccoons, porcupines, armadillos, skunks, chipmunks, mice, and many other animals and insects. They also love campers who store food in cardboard cartons in tents, on tables, or on the ground.

Patrol dishwashing

Good dishwashing techniques involve everyone, both cleanup Scouts and other patrol members. All have responsibilities. A patrol dishwashing operation will not take longer than 20 to 25 minutes when it is a *teamwork* job. Except for the two cleanup Scouts, everyone can finish in 5 or 6 minutes. The cleanup crew sets up and supervises the operation, but each patrol member takes care of washing and rinsing his own personal eating gear. Here are the steps:

The first thing cooks should do as they start the meal is to put a large pot of water over the fire. This is to be used for hot drinks, soups, cooking, etc., during the meal preparation. This pot is refilled with water and placed over a good hot fire *before* the patrol sits down to eat.

Immediately after each meal, cleanup Scouts prepare dishwashing water in a second smaller pot, adding soap to a mixture of hot and cold water. Leave the rinse water over the fire as long as possible to keep it boiling. Spread out a plastic sheet on which to lay the clean hot dishes for air drying.

Each Scout, using leaves, dry grass, snow, or paper towels, wipes out all food particles and grease from his personal eating gear before washing them. (Afterward, burn the grass, leaves, or paper.) Two Scouts who volunteer to do the personal dishes of the cleanup Scouts should be first in the dishwashing line. The cleanup Scouts start scraping out cook pots.

Remove the pot of rinse water from the fire and add the sterilizing agent. Now available are new sanitizing tablets that maintain stability in very hot water and color the water to indicate the presence of a chemical germicide.* When using them, keep the rinse water as hot as possible; this warms the utensils and aids in air drying them. But the water no longer needs to be kept at a rolling boil if the tablet has been added. If a sterilizing agent is *not* used, keep the water boiling for dunking and rinsing.

Each Scout washes his own dishes. After being washed in the hot soapy water, they are dunked in the rinse water for a minute, then placed on the

*Tri-san Sanitizer tablets are available from BSA Supply Service, No. 1969.

plastic sheet to air-dry. For handling dishes and cooking utensils in hot rinse water, use hot-pot tongs. Do not use towels for drying. When the personal dishwashing is finished, Scouts finish up the pots and the job is done.

With a minimum of water and a soft metal scouring pad or abrasive cloth, the cleanup crew washes out the inside of all pots. They wash and rinse the cook pots, then place them near the fire to dry. An important tip on pot washing: soaping the outside of pots before using them over an open fire makes scouring easier.

Store the dishes and cook pots in a dry, flyproof place such as a patrol food box, plastic bag, or equipment pack.

Clean up fireplaces and police the area. Clean, hang up, or put away all dishwashing equipment in a place where it will dry out thoroughly. Check the fire before leaving to be sure that it is *completely* out. Douse with water and stir it with a stick. Remember: This whole process is easily completed by a well-organized patrol in less than a half hour!

Garbage and trash disposal

If you camp in a public park, garbage disposal is no problem. Put garbage and other refuse in the cans provided—and do it after every meal. If cans are not provided, burn it after mealtime. First, burn everything that will burn. Next, dry out any “wet” garbage on hot stones or sticks laid across the fireplace over the remainder of your cooking fire. Once it is dry, add fuel to the fire to complete burning.

Wash or burn out all food cans, after removing both ends. Flatten them to conserve space in your tote-litter bag. Wash out jars. Don't bury any trash, cans, paper, or garbage. It probably will be dug up by animals after you leave the campsite.

Every patrol should have tote-litter bags with disposable plastic liners to carry out all unburnable trash and garbage. These are easily made by lining a cloth or heavy paper bag with a plastic bag which is closed with a rubber band or twist sealer.

The bags are carried out in the campers' packs where food was carried in. Dispose of the inner bag with trash and garbage at the nearest disposal can or take it all the way home. Do not bury it.

The Philmont Scout Ranch ranger says, “When on the trail, don't throw or bury. What you can't burn, be sure to carry—and all the way home, if necessary.”

Waste water disposal

Carefully screen out all food particles and add to drying garbage before disposing of the dishwater. If you're on a permanent camp that has established water disposal sumps, use them. Temporary, small hole sumps are no longer recommended at overnight, trail, or outpost campsites for erosion prevention reasons. Waste water may be poured out next to a stump outside of the campsite *after all food particles have been removed*. Do not pour it into the latrine.

Latrines

At developed campsites latrines are provided. Use them and do your share to keep them neat and clean. When camping out on a wilderness trail, farmer's land, or any primitive place where toilet facilities are not available, dig a straddle pit latrine as shown on page 18.

Dig a trench with vertical walls, only slightly wider than the span of a standard trench shovel (6-8 inches), approximately 18 inches deep, and

FOR OTHER SCOUTS



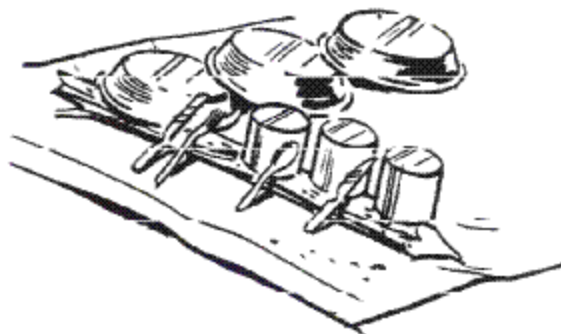
1. Each Scout wipes off his own eating utensils.



2. He washes them in a pot of wash water.



3. He rinses and sterilizes utensils by dunking them in a pot of rinse water.



4. He air dries utensils on a plastic sheet. Store in flyproof container.

"... Tell a camper by his marks"



Tote-litter bag

about 36 inches long or longer depending on the duration of your stay.

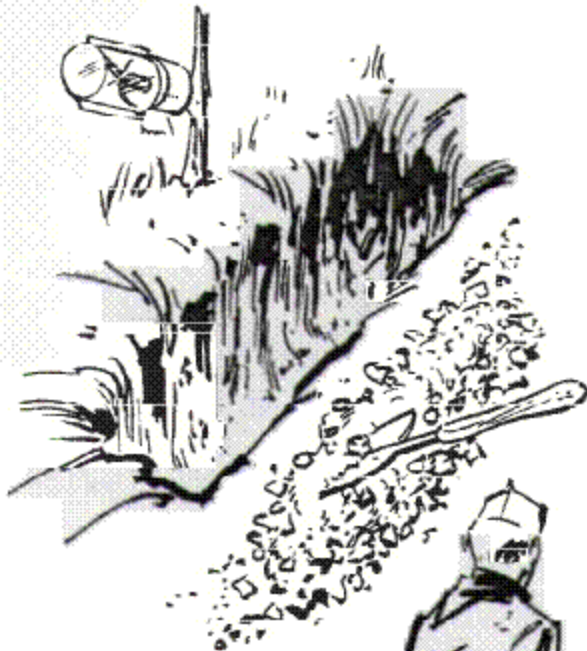
A latrine should be the *only hole you make* at a campsite. Dig it away from trees to avoid roots. Pile the soil along one side of the trench, leaving room for foot space. Shovel part of the unburnable subsoil on a plastic sheet and carry it to the fireplace to make a hearth of unburnable dirt. Leave enough soil at the latrine so that, after each use, a light covering of dirt can be scattered in with a scoop or trench shovel.

Locate the latrine at least 100 feet from the tents and kitchen area, and away from stream, spring, or lake to avoid drainage pollution. Choose a location that has some privacy. Take advantage of natural screening such as bushes, or screen it with a tarpaulin. Place toilet paper nearby, off the ground on a forked stick and covered by a tin can or plastic bag to keep it dry.

When you're breaking camp and closing the latrine, bring back the borrowed subsoil from the fireplace hearth and also ashes and charred wood to fill the trench. Make certain that all fire debris has been drowned, stirred, and positively put *out*.

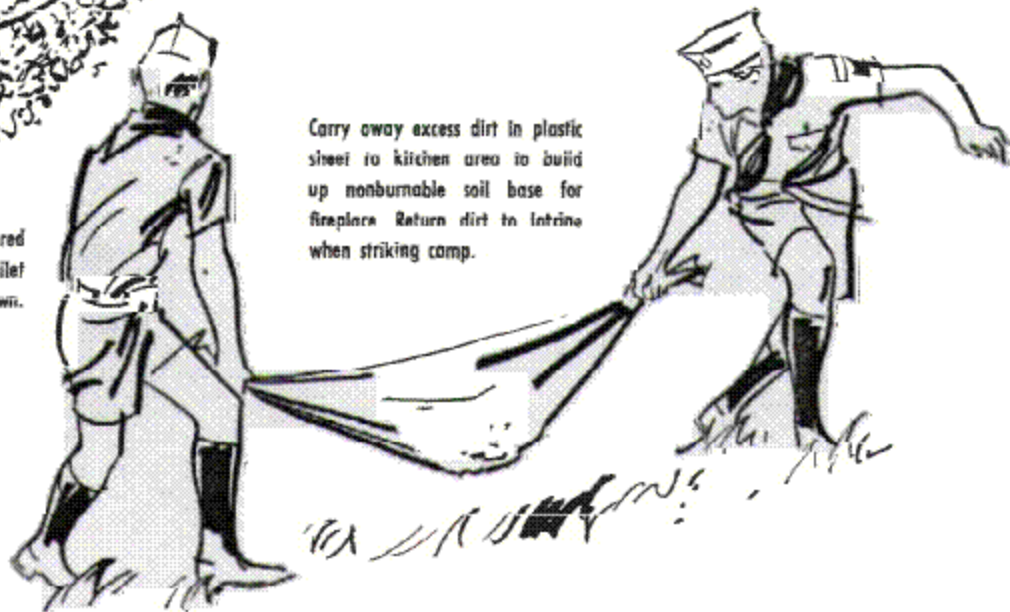
Replace the original topsoil and leave the trench slightly mounded. Otherwise, later settling of the soil will leave one of those marks of a poor camper—the vestige of a trench that will cause erosion.

You can always tell what kind of a camper has been there by the marks he leaves—or lack of them. Show your Scouts or Explorers how to live in camp, so they'll go home healthier than when they arrived. Make them so proud of the campsite they leave that they'll want to come back to it.



Dig patrol latrine in sheltered but convenient spot. Cover toilet tissue with plastic bag, as shown.

Carry away excess dirt in plastic sheet to kitchen area to build up nonburnable soil base for fireplace. Return dirt to latrine when striking camp.



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