

Meal Planning Guidelines

Remember the 13th point of the Scout Law: 'A Scout is hungry.'

Eating well is not just part of the fun of camping, it is most important to eat well in order to replace the energy used in the hiking & activities that busy Scouts are prone to do. Meal planning is not hard - no scout ever came home from the weekend camp malnourished. The Patrol should agree to try new meals - not please every palate. Build consensus & excitement in your meal planning activity. Not everyone will agree to every meal plan & like at school, they will eat whatever is provided. Don't go overboard; if you haven't tried it at home, your Patrol may not appreciate your efforts. Recognize your Patrol's skill level and work to improve it.

Please take special note of any dietary needs of the Scouts & adults. Allergies to foods are common - like peanuts, strawberries, flour products, etc.

Don't forget the Duty Roster. It will save time in determining who is doing what on the campout.

Considerations for planning Patrol meals:

Breakfast - The MOST important meal of the day. Eggs are quick & easy to prepare & are packed with protein. Try 'Egg Beaters' if you don't want to carry a bunch of real eggs. Flour tortillas make good wrappers for anything like breakfast burritos & choc-o-tacos. Limit the sugars at breakfast or you will be hungry by 10:00 am. Plan a big breakfast on Saturday & something easy on Sunday to minimize clean-up.

Lunch - Remember you will be very busy during the day. Planning an elaborate lunch will leave you back in camp while the other Patrols are still at the activities. Cold sandwich/wrap, hot dogs, chef salad, or boil-in-bag meal will get you in & out quickly with very little mess.

Snacks - Plan for hunger about 3:00 pm. Bring trail mix, jerky, fruit, lemonade, tea - something to hold you until dinner.

Dinner - This is the meal to really show-off your cooking skills! Be creative - don't repeat the same tired old Mac-n-cheese dish you've had at every campout. Try Dutch oven cooking or a one-pot meal. Pre-grill chicken & make fajitas. Try not to repeat. Learn a new dish - experiment. Don't forget the big dessert, you've earned it!

Cracker barrel - You may do this on Friday after camp is setup. Bring cheese, hard sausage, crackers & cookies. You'll sleep better with something in your belly.

Drinks - NO Soda! Your body needs WATER to rehydrate. Sodas won't do that. Bring Country Time or Gatorade mix & make your own flavored drink. Juices, milk, tea, coffee, or hot chocolate as needed.

Guests - You may have an adult (or 2) or other scout guests dining with you. Take this fact into consideration as you plan.

Keep your Patrol Box clean - Restock with non-perishables like salt, pepper, spices, foil, soap, bleach (refill small bottle), matches, paper towels, hand sanitizer...

Use your mess kit - No paper plates, disposable cups or utensils. Remember 'Clean' & 'Thrifty'?

One-pot meals are your friend - Pick a meat, a couple of veggies, sauce, seasoning & you're done. Get fancy & include a rice or pasta. Cook meat first, and then warm the rest. Ground beef with Sloppy Joe or BBQ sauce with green beans & corn with a slice of Texas toast on the side...MMMMM! One-pot to cook; one pot to clean! Try it in the Dutch oven. Lots of great recipes on the web...

Parent/Scout instructions for buying food:

Grubmaster - Thanks for agreeing to buy the food for your Patrol. It is a very important job & a big responsibility. The menus & shopping list should have some of the more common items identified. The items required for the Patrol Box need to be listed also. Typically Scouts buy food on Thursday night before a campout. If you buy it all on Thursday, please place cold goods in your refrigerator at home & only transfer it to a cooler with ice right before you leave for the campout. (This helps reduce chances that the food will get 'water-logged'.) Don't forget to borrow a cooler on Monday night if you need it for the campout.

Parents - An adult should go with Scouts to supervise the shopping. Please look over the 'Menu Planner' & 'Grubmaster Shopping List' to ensure everything necessary to prepare & eat the menu items is specified on the shopping list. Other than soap, oil, & bleach - don't assume there is anything available unless your scout has recently verified that it is in the Patrol Box. For example, if pancakes are on the menu - add water, pancake mix, butter & syrup because they are all necessary. If chicken is on the menu, please buy only boneless breasts. It is best to avoid chicken with bones as Scouts sometimes tend to undercook it. Please make sure that *adequate quantities are purchased for the number eating with the Patrol*. Scouts are thrifty. We do not want a lot of leftovers, but we want to make sure everyone has enough to eat & remain within the Allowed Food Budget. It is better to have a bit too much rather than not enough. The Scouts are perfectly happy with store brand products if there is a significant savings.

It is perfectly acceptable for you to help the Scout pre-cook or repackage the meals. In fact, it is a good opportunity to stretch their cooking & planning skills! Grilling chicken or browning meat will save time on the campout & ensure a properly prepared entrée. These can be vacuum sealed (or freezer bag) & frozen. Try to repackage other foods in 'serving size' portions. This will cut down on waste & carrying requirements.

Above all, Keep it Simple - Make it Fun!