

## Getting Ready To Go Camping.

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Let assume you are new to camping but you have some experience as a child. You will need to become familiar with camping gear. If you have a friend that camps a lot you can go with them to learn the basics.

Ah go with a friend and show him he is smarter than me not a chance. For I would never hear the end of it.

The first thing you will need is some type of shelter for you and the kids.

Then you will need something to sleep in a sleeping bag and something to cook with. Pots and pans portable barbecue hey I know how to use that. Already you are on the road to your first camping trip.

What Gear Do I Need?

Most first timers start out with a tent. The first tent should not be too expensive but it should provide good shelter in the wind and rain. With all the models out there spend some time looking them over do not get one that requires a master's degree in engineering to set up. Stay to the basic needs as you get more experience the tent can be given to the kids as you will upgrade to a fancy one.

Remember you are camping on a budget no use in spending thousands of dollars for all the gear only to find the wife, kids, or yourself hates camping. The tent should shield you from bugs sun and the rain.

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There are bugs out here in the wilderness so be ware. The tent should have a good screen to keep the little varmints out and yet be easy for the kids to open.

The tent will be some place to sleep and store your cloths. If the weather turns bad them the kids can play or read in the tent under supervision. It is nice to sleep under the stars but you will have to get a tent sooner or later.

So choose one that has enough room for you and the family and all the gear you will want to put in the tent while you are out swimming. Your tent should cost between 100 to 200 dollars depending on the style you pick for your family

If you want to sleep in a tent or under the stars up should have some type of padding the ground is not comfortable to sleep on. You will find padded mats made from plastic with air bubbles, vinyl cover stuffed pads and the good old air mattress.

I prefer the air mattress as it also doubles for the family to float around on the lake. If you go with the air mattress remember you will need a pump to blow them up a large foot pump works best.

Sleeping bags

if you are like most people you will be camping in the summer and early fall so do not buy a sleeping bag rated for -20 weather this will just be extra money that could be use for something other thing you will want.

The light rectangular sleeping bag will do If you and your spouse want to sleep in the same sleeping bag just zip them together and you will have one large sleeping bag. Do not forget your pillows but if you do roll up your towels

they can make not a bad pillow.

Be sure to have at least two ground tarps at least the size of the floor of your tent. Place one down on the ground then set your tent on it. The second one may be used as a shelter above the picnic table.

### Campground Cooking

All of us love the smell of food cooking outside whether it is at the camp ground or in the backyard. If you barbecue a lot at home you all ready have the basic know how to camp cook. Most public camp grounds and private camp ground will have a picnic table and a cooking pit at each camp site.

Take a portable grill with you and you will feel right at home. Pick up a gas stove and a set of pots and pans and you are ready to be a camp chef, remember a coffee pot as the nearest coffee shop may be 20 or so miles away.

Depending on you level of cooking skills you will now be able to prepare meats as if you were at home.

When shopping for gear go to the local big box store as they will carry every thing you need. Some will have tents set up if so climb in ask yourself is this roomy and will every one fit in comfortable. along with all the stuff you will take with you.

If the tents are not set up mark out a piece of the floor at home with tape this will be the same size as the floor of the tent call a family meeting and get everybody to lay in the tape lines you laid down is it the right size? If not reassess your needs.

That's it...you are that much closer to have a fun camping trip for all!

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