

HYGIENE

SCOUTS SURVIVAL SKILLS BADGE



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SCOUTS AND VICTORINOX DISCLAIMER

The Scout Association recognises that bladed and sharply pointed hand-tools are important for working on survival skills. We promote the safe use of knives used as a tool, reiterating UK Law. Knives with a fixed non-folding blade, a folding knife with a blade over three inches in length or a folding knife which, locks in place require the person carrying such a knife in public (whatever age) to have good reason for carrying the tool. It is illegal to sell such a tool to a person under 18.

The Scout Association holds no responsibility from injuries that have occurred as a result of using this resource. Whenever a knife is to be used, or any other activity a risk assessment must be made and suitable controls put in place.



INTRODUCTION >>>>

Personal hygiene, cleanliness and dealing with waste correctly are important in preventing infection or disease if you find yourself in a survival situation. The cleaner you can keep yourself and the area around you, the healthier you will be, which will improve your chances of survival.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Washing

Ideally you should wash every day with hot water and soap. If water is unavailable or scarce, you can freshen up by removing as much of your clothing as is practical and exposing your skin to the air. Be careful not to get burnt in the sun or to get too cold. Take particular care in keeping your feet, armpits, crotch, hands and hair clean and dry as these are prime areas for infection.



Hands

Wash your hands after going to the toilet, giving first aid or handling materials that may carry germs. Wash your hands before and after handling food or drinking water. Do not lick your fingers or put them in your mouth and keep your fingernails trimmed short.

Hair

Keep your hair clean, combed through and short or tied back to avoid attracting fleas, lice or bacteria.

Feet

It is important to keep your feet healthy as they may be your only transport in a survival situation. Wash and massage your feet every day and dry them thoroughly before putting your shoes or boots back on. Stop frequently to rest your feet and check them for any sores. Shake your shoes or boots and socks out to remove any stones or materials that may cause blisters.



Teeth

Your mouth and teeth should be cleaned every day. If you don't have a toothbrush you can make one from a 1cm wide twig. Crush the twig at one end to separate the fibres and use it to brush your teeth. Wrapping a strip of clean cloth around your fingers and rubbing your teeth will also help keep them clean.

Clothing

Clothing and bedding should also be kept as clean as possible. Aim to have clean underwear and socks each day. If water is unavailable or scarce, clean your clothing and bedding by shaking it vigorously and airing it. If you have a sleeping bag, turn it inside out after using it, then shake and air it.



LEAVE NO TRACE – DEALING WITH WASTE AT CAMP >>>>>

Knowing how to deal with waste when on camp is critical for cleanliness, legal responsibility and the opportunity to camp again on the same site. It will also help you to stay hygienic and healthy if you find yourself in a survival situation.

Washing up water

Use as little soap or washing up detergent as possible as it can be highly toxic to water life and last for a long time in the soil. Use an environmentally friendly detergent where possible.

Cooking fats and grease

These can trap other pollutants and provide a breeding ground for bacteria and vermin. Try to minimise their use when cooking at camp and plan meals that use less oil or fat.



TIP

Use cooking utensils which will not require grease or fat, such as kebab sticks or tin foil.



**‘LEAVE
NOTHING
BEHIND BUT
YOUR THANKS’
BADEN-POWELL**



BURNING WASTE

Before you leave for camp, find out the rules around flammable waste. Visit bit.ly/flammablewaste and bit.ly/campfiresbonfires for more information.

Hazardous waste

There is risk of an accident caused by hazardous waste such as objects with sharp edges, glass or chemical contents. Aside from a trip hazard or ‘clutter factor’, paper, plastic or flammable chemical waste near a fire or cooking area also present fire risks.

Other waste

If you are unable to dispose of your waste then put dry waste in one bin bag and wet waste in another. Food waste should be double bagged and kept out of the reach of animals.



Digging a wet pit

The best way to dispose of waste water if you are not on a campsite is using a wet pit. A wet pit is a serious hazard and needs to be clearly marked and preferably roped off. A pit should never be within 100m of a water course, lake or well. If you are camping in a farmer's field make sure you have asked permission to dig a wet pit first. For digging a toilet pit see page XX.

How to make a wet pit in the ground

- ① Measure out a 30cm square patch of ground and carefully cut out and remove the turf. Place it face down and keep it well watered so you can replace it when you leave.
- ② Dig a hole 45-60cm deep.
- ③ Make a filtering frame by weaving a lattice of green branches (with holes approximately 1cm apart) place it over the hole and put long grass or bracken on top.
- ④ To use, simply pour the used 'greywater' slowly over the filter frame, the solid matter will be filtered out and the water will drain into the pit.
- ⑤ Change the filter material at least once a day. If you're on a long camp, move the position of the wet pit every few days.

SAFETY TIP

The water needs to be hot to wash your equipment but be careful not to scald your hands. Use washing up gloves to help protect your hands from the heat.

Three bowl washing up system

A good system using three or more bowls that cleans equipment in stages:

- ① Fill the first bowl with warm soapy water and rinse off any food that remains on the equipment.
- ② The second bowl should be filled with hot soapy water and used to clean the equipment.
- ③ Finally fill the third bowl with very hot water and rinse off the soap.



TIP

Wash your hands separately before you start washing your equipment. Use a cleaning brush for the soapy bowls. Put them in rows and make sure everyone knows which bowl is which. Use clean drying racks and only use one set of tea towels per session to avoid spreading any germs.



FOOD HYGIENE >>>>>

Hygiene is especially important when it comes to the preparation and storage of food.

Fresh food

Keeping fresh food chilled is difficult when camping outdoors. With careful menu planning and choosing ingredients that are safe to store, it can be done. Making use of cool boxes or portable refrigerators and buying food items just before use will help.

Ready to eat food

Foods that are to be eaten without any further cooking are the most risky as cooking destroys harmful bacteria. Cooked and ready to eat food should always be stored away from raw foods. Make sure you have enough ice packs and storage boxes for this purpose and check to see if the site has the facility to freeze these for you.

Meat

If taking meat, take it frozen so it can defrost slowly in a cool box. If you cannot get fresh milk while you are on camp then take long life cartons but treat it as fresh once you have opened it.

Canned food

The risk of getting ill from canned foods is very small, but don't use cans that are badly dented, damaged, have holes in them or are rusty. Wipe the lids with an antibacterial cloth before opening them.

Thorough cleaning

Use boiled water to clean your utensils after use especially if they have been used in food preparation.

TIP

If a Swiss Army Knife is used in food preparation it should be fully immersed in boiling water to make sure it cleans into the grooves and hinges. Make sure it has cooled down before picking it up. Use a drop of oil on the hinges to keep the tools moving smoothly.

Water purification

Water should be purified before you drink it, use it for brushing your teeth or washing up kitchen equipment. The best way is to boil it over a fire for at least five minutes which should kill most germs or bacteria. Let it cool before drinking or using it to wash with to avoid scalding yourself. You can also use water purification tablets. These do leave a slight chemical taste but you can add juice or other ingredients to hide this.

SAFETY TIP

Read the manufacturer's information and instructions before using purification tablets as they may not be suitable for those with certain medical conditions or allergies.

Purification tablets kill many (but not all) microorganisms. They do not filter out sediment which should be done separately using a Millbank bag.

Food hygiene checklist

- ① Keep food covered.
- ② Do not use dirty or damaged equipment for cooking.
- ③ Use tongs for handling food.
- ④ Prevent insects, animals and birds from entering food preparation or storage areas. Keep foods in lidded containers but beware of squirrels who are able to chew through plastic.
- ⑤ Do not to leave any food or rubbish where it may attract pests.
- ⑥ Keep moisture away from dried foods, as this will encourage the growth of bacteria and moulds.
- ⑦ Put vegetables, salads and fruit in a cool box or lidded container.



TOILETS AND PERSONAL WASTE >>>>>

If you are camping in a location where there are no toilet facilities you will need to get rid of your own waste. If you are staying in the same place for a few nights you should build a permanent toilet pit. If you are moving on each night then you can dig a temporary cathole. In both cases you should aim to dig a hole at least 200metres from the campsite, pathways and water sources.

Digging a cathole

Find a sheltered area and dig a small hole about 20cm deep. When you have finished replace the soil and spread ground cover such as leaves and stones over the top. Do not bury your toilet paper or sanitary products. Put them in a sealable biodegradable bag and take it with you to dispose of when you leave.



Building a toilet

If you are camping in the same location for a few nights and the landowner gives their permission, you can build a toilet pit.

- ① The pit should be dug downwind from your camp and well away from your tent and any water source. You can create a natural screen by digging it behind a group of bushes or you can build a screen using sticks and leaves.
- ② Measure out a 100cm x 30cm rectangular patch of ground and carefully cut out and remove the turf. Place it face down and keep it well watered so you can replace it when you leave.
- ③ Dig a pit 60cm deep and leave the soil in a mound nearby; some soil can be scattered over the pit after each use.
- ④ Place logs around the edges of the pit to mark it out.
- ⑤ Dig a separate pit nearby for urine approx 100cm x 100cm and 20cm deep. Line it with stones, twigs and leaves.

AT THE END OF CAMP >>>>>

These are the essential things you need to do before you leave:

- ① Clean your equipment before packing it away.
- ② Sort your clean clothes from dirty ones, ready for washing or putting away when you get home.
- ③ Dispose of your waste and waste water in accordance with campsite rules or if not on camp, in accordance with the instructions above.
- ④ If you have dug a wet pit, remove the filtering frame and fill the pit in. Replace the turf on the top and put a 'foul ground' marker (a small cross made of sticks) in the middle to warn others that you have used that spot.
- ⑤ Make sure your campfire is completely out and that you have doused the embers with water (see putting out a fire resource). Replace any turf you cut to make your fireplace.
- ⑥ Before you leave walk around your campsite and check you have left no rubbish or equipment behind; be especially vigilant for tent pegs left in the ground.
- ⑦ Thank the landowner or campsite manager and suggest they carry out their own site inspection. This courtesy will go a long way, especially if you want to camp again at the same site.

CAMPSITE LAYOUT:

Things to consider	Water	Shade & Shelter	Lighting	Drainage	Down wind	Ideal position
First Aid Tent	X	X	X			Centre of camp and accessible
Dining Shelter		X	X			Close to kitchen to stop food going cold, but not in line with smoke from fire
Kitchen	X	X	X			Positioned so that smoke will not blow into camp and the dining shelter
Toilets		X	X	X	X	Downwind of the camp itself but not too far. At least 200 metres from camp, pathways or water source
Washing area	X		X	X		Positioned between toilets and camp
Chopping area						Rope off from rest of camp close to woodpile, but put neither too close to fire
Water points	X			X		If possible positioned where any spilt water can be drained away
Tents	X			X		Do not position in a river bend or at a angle where the wind blows through the tent doors
Campfire						Positioned at least two metres from tents.
Wet pit						100metres from water course

ACTIVITY SHEET >>>>

CAMPSITE LAYOUT ACTIVITY

Draw your campsite layout (you can base this on a real location or make one up to show the best layout for your campsite facilities)

Each cube is 1 Metre squared.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
2																						
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Where would be the best place to put these camp features?

First Aid Tent
Toilets

Chopping Area
Tents

Wet Pit
Kitchen

Washing Area
Water Points

Campfire
Dining Shelter