



Tips on Personal Gear

It is usually unnecessary for someone new to backpacking or canoeing to invest a great deal of money in new equipment. We suggest borrowing the required gear from an older Scout or friends with more experience. The Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan High Adventure Base has a small selection of backpacks and other available items for no extra charge (please contact us for more information). Those who are new to High Adventure and backcountry camping would do best to try out borrowed gear to better understand the available features before purchasing their own.

As Scouts, we should remember that being thrifty implies reusing old equipment whenever possible and acting as responsible consumers. If you have decided to purchase new gear, make sure that you do your homework and consult multiple sources for reviews, advice, etc. Do NOT merely follow the word of a salesperson. Remember, their job is to sell you the most expensive thing they can, not necessarily the item that best suits your needs.

For further assistance, consult *The Complete Walker IV* by Fletcher and Rawlins (perhaps the most comprehensive resource for camping equipment available) or contact the High Adventure Staff.

Buying the Right Boots

- Hiking boots should be sturdy and protect from natural elements.
- The fewer the number of seams, the harder it will be for water to penetrate the boot.
- Full-grain leather and Gore-Tex help the boots breathe, keeping your feet dryer while preventing sweat build-up.
- For hiking, the boots should cover the ankle to provide better stabilization and support.
- Size your hiking boots correctly. Go to a reputable dealer with experience in fitting boots.
- Friction is a contributing factor to blisters. A properly sized boot will keep the foot from moving around in the boot. Also, the use of sock liners will reduce friction.
- Wear the socks you plan to hike in when purchasing boots.

Breaking in Boots

It is a good idea to break in your boots before the trip.

- Wear the boots often to allow them to mold to your feet and work the stiffness out.
- Check the literature before applying any dressings or waterproofing; some boots will work better without these.
- One method to break in boots is to wear them on a series of hikes or walks, gradually increasing distance and the weight you carry.
- You can also soak the boots in water, then walk in them until they are dry.

Extra Footwear

- On canoeing and kayaking trips, you may want to bring a pair of shoes or sandals that can get wet for loading and unloading and getting into your boat. Make sure the second pair is equally appropriate for the environment.
- Some backpackers like to have a second pair of shoes or sandals for the campsite to let their feet and boots dry out. A pair of lightweight shoes will also help reduce the impact at your campsite.
- Socks should be wool or a synthetic blend appropriate for hiking. Cotton will not wick moisture away from the foot and will leave the wearer more susceptible to blisters.
- Be sure to bring extra socks to allow one pair to dry out when in camp.

Proper foot care is essential. It only takes a few minutes to remove your boots and check your feet. Do it often.



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Sleeping Gear

Sleeping bags for High Adventure trips should be of good quality and rated for summer temperatures in the Northern Wisconsin area.

Types of Sleeping Bags

- Goose Down – Lasts for years. Ounce for ounce, it is lighter and less bulky than any other material. It will not, however, keep you warm if wet. More expensive.
- Synthetic Material – Warmer when wet; heavier and bulkier; less expensive.

We highly recommend ground pads for High Adventure treks. Not only do they make sleeping more comfortable, but they help insulate you from the colder ground.

Types of Sleeping Pads

- Foam Pads: Bulkier, nearly indestructible, can be less comfortable, less expensive.
- Self-inflating: Smaller, more damage-prone (will be useless if there is a hole of any size), can be more comfortable, more expensive.

LEAVE YOUR PILLOW AT HOME!

Extra clothes packed in your sleeping bag's stuff sack can serve as a pillow.

SECURITY OF PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

The security of personal possessions at camp is the responsibility of the individual. Personal possessions such as stereos, iPods, etc., have no place in camp. It is virtually impossible to securely store valuables in your campsite (watches, jewelry, or money). Please keep these items out of sight or on your person. Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan Scout Reservation cannot be responsible for the loss of personal possessions. If an item has significant monetary or sentimental value, the trek is probably not the place for it.