



Basic Gear to Buy Now: Mess Kit, Spork, and Hot Cup



Mr. Eric's Gear Guide

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- What to look for:
 - Compact, easily stowed mess kit
 - Smooth and easy to wash
 - Plastic spork or better yet a sponork (if it has a knife edge)
- Eric's picks
 - Any Light My Fire brand
 - Thermos Funtainer is great for mixing hot chocolate and keeping it hot (optional)



It's a sponork!





Basic Gear to Buy Now: Water Bottle



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- What to look for:
 - Hook or strap for attaching to backpack or belt
 - Totally smooth inside and easy to wash
 - Easy access, protected mouthpiece, BPA free
- Eric's picks
 - Hydro Flask metal bottles
 - Camelbak plastic bottles
- **Eric says avoid:**
 - **Polar bottles – bumpy inside is impossible to clean**



AVOID





Basic Gear to Buy Now: Rain Gear



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- What to look for:
 - Packable or easily stowed
 - Breathable is better
 - Pit zippers for cooling
 - Bonus: pants make awesome shewck shewck sound when you walk
- Eric's picks
 - Frogg Toggs jacket / pants
 - Mammut, Marmot, Columbia or North Face rain jackets
 - **Easy starter option: disposable poncho**



MAMMUT





Basic Gear to Buy Now: Simple Knife



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- What to look for:
 - Locking blade – either lock back or liner lock
 - Serrated edges are cool but not so great for whittling and sharpening
 - Keep it small – 3 inch max blade is big enough
- Eric's picks
 - BSA knives
 - Gerber, Buck, Swiss brands
- **Eric says avoid:**
 - **Sheath knives – not allowed**





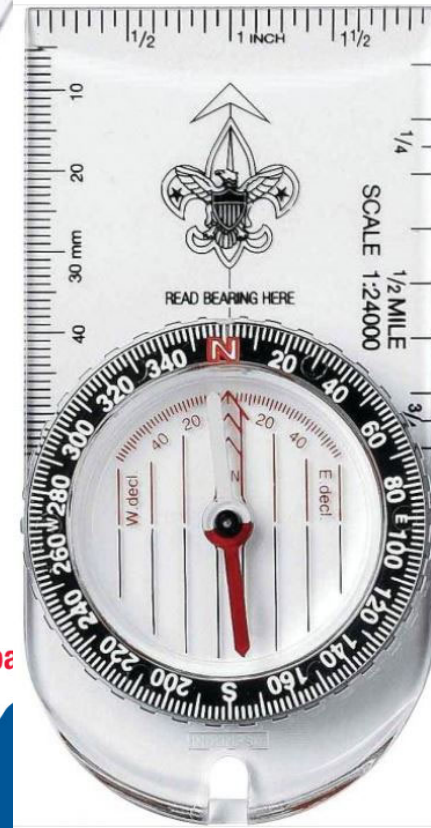
Basic Gear to Buy Now: Compass



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- What to look for:
 - Clear with flat baseplate
 - Strap for wearing around your neck
 - Declination adjustment is a nice extra (compensates for true north vs. magnetic north – VA is between 5° – 10° W)



- **Eric's picks**
 - **Silva Polaris**
 - **Silva Explorer**





Basic Gear to Buy Now: Sleeping Bag



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- What to look for:
 - Rated by temperature T
 - Think about when you will use it most – summer (lightweight, high T) versus winter (heavier, low T)
 - Mummy bags tend to be warmer / more compact but are more constricting
 - Get a fleece liner insert, good for another 10 deg

- **Eric's picks**

- **Coleman, Marmot, North Face**

Rectangular



Mummy



Fleece Liner





Basic Gear to Buy Now: Flashlight and Headlamp

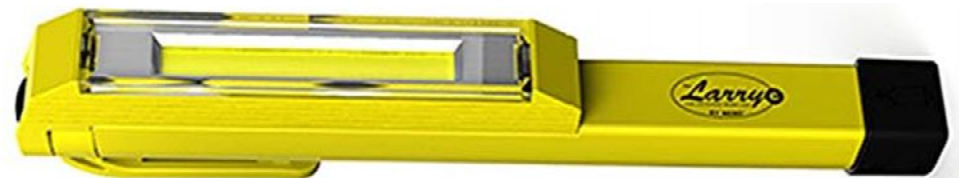


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- What to look for:
 - Compact, easily stowed
 - AA or AAA battery powered
 - Night vision red light mode
 - Clips for attaching are nice
 - Headlamp – tilting light
 - Headlamp – comfy strap
- Eric's picks
 - Energizer brand
 - NEBO Larry LED flashlights
- **Eric says avoid:**
 - **No large or big battery lights (e.g. MagLite)**





Basic Gear to Buy Soon: Day Pack



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- What to look for:
 - Sized by volume in L, 15 - 20L is good size
 - Comfy straps and padded ventilated back
 - Room for hydration pack insert is awesome
 - String bags / sackpacks are OK but straps quickly hurt shoulders
- Eric's picks
 - Osprey brand



← Daypack

Hydration
Insert



← String Bag /
Sackpack

Prepa



SCOUTS BSA



Gear to Buy Soon: Boots, Socks & Base Layers



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- What to look for:
 - Waterproof boots
 - They don't stay waterproof if you are wading above them !
 - Hiking socks: wool, nylon, and spandex blends
 - Base layers: long johns of moisture wicking fabrics: poly / spandex blend
 - Class B shirts are great!
- **Eric says avoid:**
 - **Cotton kills: it traps moisture and can cause or worsen hypothermia**





Gear to Borrow Before U Buy: Ground Pads



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- What to look for:
 - Insulation rating measured in R value:
 - Protects you from ground
 - Higher R is better
 - Compact, easily stowed
- Eric's picks
 - Therma-A-Rest foam pads
 - Klymit inflatable pads
 - Therm-A-Rest self-inflating (foam reinforced interior)
- **Eric says avoid:**
 - **No big air mattresses**





Gear to Borrow Before U Buy: Tents and Hammocks



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- What to look for:
 - Easy set-up
 - Small tent with room for 2 to 3 people
 - Gear storage area is nice
 - Get minimal tents for backpacking
- Eric's picks
 - Any Eureka 2 - 4 pers. tent
 - ENO hammock with rain fly
- **Eric says avoid:**
 - **NO GIANT PARTY TENTS**

2 Person with
and without rain
cover



ENO Hammock
(without rain fly)



4 Person



NO !





Gear to Borrow Before U Buy: Serious Backpacks



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- What to look for:
 - Sized by volume in L, 50 – 60L is good size
 - Comfy straps, padded ventilated back, easy gear attachments
 - Consider typical trek length when sizing backpack
 - Internal frame typ. preferred over external frame (can be headbangers)
 - Get help with size / fitting
 - **Never carry more than 1/3 of your body weight**

- **Eric's pick: Osprey brand**





Troop-Provided Gear (don't buy): Water Filtration



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- Usage:
 - Purifying / filtering water from natural water sources (lakes, streams)
 - Means you don't have to carry as much water with you when backpacking
- Troop favorites:
 - Platypus
 - MSR pump style
 - Purification tablets
 - Lifestraw personal straw



Platypus Gravity Action Filter



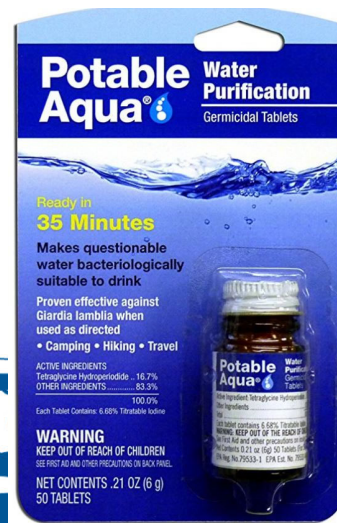
Personal Straw



MSR Pump Filter



Tablets





Troop-Provided Gear (don't buy): Stoves & Cooking Gear



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- Troop favorites - camp:
 - Eureka Ignite Plus 2-burner propane camp stoves
 - Dutch oven
 - Cast iron skillet



- Troop favorites - backpack:
 - JetBoil
 - Primus Trail Stove

