

Troop 157 Tips #3, Sleeping bags



My sleeping bag is the size of a small microwave, HOW do I carry it?!

Yep, this is an issue. Many scouts have sleeping bags that are left over from Cubs. Carrying them on a hike wasn't a concern. Our advice when it comes to camping equipment is to always be thinking about putting it in your backpack. So, you need to buy smartly.

If we are taking the trailer, about any size sleeping bag will do, because we have lots of room. But if we are hiking totally different story—we are worried about weight and size. How will you secure it to your backpack? Will it fit inside your backpack? Will there be room for anything else?

If money is not an issue, then you can have several different type sleeping bags. One for summer and one for winter. But becomes a little bit expensive. A good sleeping bag is probably around \$100, but if you take care of it, it will last you years!

Remember, a sleeping bag that is good down to 20 degrees, means that the person is sleeping in thermal underwear, socks, cap, and is dry. This temp rating is the extreme, meaning you might be comfortable but might be a little chilly. This temp rating does not guarantee warmth. SO.... What's the scout motto? **BE PREPARED!**

In the fall, I take my 45 degree bag (It's good for temps down to about 55 degrees) and a small fleece blanket. (\$2.50 Walmart). The fleece blanket will give me some extra warmth if its really cool, or if really hot, it works like a blanket when I sleep on top of my sleeping bag.



In the winter, you can always double bag it. Take two sleeping bags and put one inside the other.

Cost.

- Down cost more. Down is warmer. Down doesn't dry out if wet. Down doesn't provide warmth when wet. Down compresses to a pretty small size and is lighter. New down bags are treated to stay water proof if wet, but more expensive.
- Synthetics. Cheaper. Warmer if wet. Doesn't compress down to a small size like the same temp down bag.
- Hint. Buy sleeping bags out of season. Buy a winter bag in the summer. Buy a summer bag in the winter. These are discounted. Buy last years version. Each year the big companies like REI, Marmot, etc. —change color of their bags. Just like cars they go on sale for a discounted price.
- Read reviews. Each bag has a different cut. They fit differently. They pack differently. Some will come with a stuff sack. Come will come with a compression sack. Try them on if possible.

Types of Sleeping Bags.

There's really two types of sleeping bags. The rectangular and the mummy. What you select is based on personal preference.



- Rectangular. I like rectangular because I don't like to feel compressed or restricted. My bag is down, little expensive but I bought on sale and so it wasn't too bad. It's 15 years old and still works great, so I've gotten my money's worth. Feathers aren't compressed yet, so still works great. It compresses down to the size of a volleyball. I took it to Philmont. It is a 20 degree bag. This is my winter bag. It is an REI.
- I also have a summer rectangular bag that is rated for 45 degrees. It's light weight, synthetic, rolls up to something a little bigger than two softballs.
- Mummy. My son likes mummy, he thinks it looks cool. It is a synthetic bag. It sort of hugs the body, therefore a little warmer. It compresses down to the size of a volleyball. Took it to Philmont. It is a 20 degree bag. He's had it for about 10 years. It is a Kelty brand.
- Fleece bag. This is a light weight bag. Great for the summers where you still might need a little warmth. Camp Euchee in the summer may be 95 degrees during the day, but at night it is around 70 degrees with humidity, so it gets a little cool. Some may be in the form of a rectangular sleeping bag, or may just be a blanket. Walmart.
- Silk and cotton liners. I don't know of a lot of scouts that use these. Usually a very light weight bag you insert inside your sleeping bag. Gives you some extra warmth. Protects the main bag from smells and body dirt. Packs down the size of a baseball.
- Going to a good camping store can't be beat. Unroll the sleeping bag, find a sleeping pad, take your shoes off, get in it. Try it out. Talk with the store associates. Ask about warranties. Read the reviews.
- Nothing wrong with Kmart or Walmart sleeping bags. They are a little big bigger than we want, but the price is right.
- Be sure with any sleeping bag you get a compression bag or some type of water proof bag. When you go to bed at night, you want a DRY sleeping bag.



STUFF SACK	COMPRESSION SACK	DRY BAG
<p>Ideal For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term storage <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve loft of insulation 	<p>Ideal For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backpacking • Camping <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save space 	<p>Ideal For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canoeing • Kayaking • Boating <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep gear dry 