

Mr. Wills' Guide for Surviving Summer Camp

HYDRATION

We know Euchee is hot, but I talked to the camp staff yesterday at Skymont, and he said average summer temps are high 80s and sunny. Nights low 70s.

At Euchee we can expect about 90 degrees in the shade, with no wind.

So.... be sure each scout has a water bottle that they keep filled. A "camel back" works great, and you can fill it up at breakfast, lunch and dinner. If you're not drinking 3 or 4 of containers a day (especially in this heat) you are NOT drinking enough water. We've had a couple of campouts where scouts become dehydrated and it's not fun! It ruins your day! Hot, dizzy, headache, feel like you need to throw up, nausea, etc.

What's the solution? When you get up drink a bottle of water BEFORE breakfast, then drink plenty of water throughout the day! Stay ahead of the hydration curve!

PUT your name on everything.

SLEEPING

Summer camp provides the big two man wall tents. Some are better than others, so someone have some duct tape is a good thing to cover holes. They also provide the standard army canvas sleeping cot. I would bring a sleeping pad of some sort.

Sleeping bags.... I normally bring two single size sheets, and my fleece blanket. Although HOT during the day, it will drop down to the low 70's and with the humidity (dampness) it feels a little cooler. Some scouts will drag their cots outside and sleep. Or bring a very lightweight sleeping bag. Don't forget a small pillow.

I do recommend purchasing some type of battery fan. Those neat little hand operated fans that the scouts can purchase and carry around are a waste. Get something that uses about 6 D size batteries. I use a Coleman and set it on my trunk and it's enough to create small breeze on my face to cool me off and then I switch it off sometime in the night. I bought this at Wal-Mart for \$20. I replace the batteries about every two years. There are fans that you can clip to poles and stuff and are neat.



Mosquito netting is not required. For some reasons we don't have much of a bug problem at Euchee. But, don't forget some bug spray (liquid vs. aerosol). Bugs don' like Bounce dryer towels and leaving them in your tent is good, plus it takes the smell out of the tent after 3 days of heat.

Find your roommate now. Figure out how to get along. MARK EVERYTHING with your initials.

CLOTHES

Scouts need their full uniform (bring your scarf and leave the sash at home). We wear our brown uniform shirts to closing every night and morning flags.

Should bring a t-shirt for everyday. Scout t-shirts are great. Leave the Mega Death Rock band t-shirt at home. On Monday and Wednesday we will wear our troop t-shirt gray then the blue one! There are scout t-shirts to purchase up there. Your scout will gather quite a few of these during his years of scouting.

Fresh socks every morning is a good thing....keeps the trench foot thing from happening

OA guys bring OA sash

If he's taking a water MB then I recommend 2 bathing suits—also recommend a tube or powder bottle of GOLD Bond Medicated cream/powder. Your scout will try to wear their wet bathing suit all day long. After two days they will have the Euchee Trot and be in big time PAIN.

I recommend two towels...one just gets really funky after a day or two.

Bring shower shoes/flip flops to wear in central showers. Not allowed to wear these shoes anywhere else.

Sturdy, closed toe and closed heel shoes for daily wear....I bring tennis shoes and a hiking shoes.

Bring a hat...scout hat is good, wide brim hat is good....Auburn Football hat is bad.

Bring one hanger to hang you scout shirt on.

Sunscreen---yes! Bug spray---yes! Small personal first aid kit---yes!

USE your SCOUT book to pack

Most scouts bring the standard footlocker with lock. Can be purchased at Wal-mart, Kmart, etc. If you need more than that, you're bringing TOO much! But your name on it with duct tape.

I wouldn't bring many snacks....it will just attract critters. Two years ago, after the first day, one scout had a cot FULL of ants because of stuff he had in his pants pockets. They can buy snacks up there.

Equipment

You really don't need much. Pack your trunk a couple of days a head, then when your mom or dad says "did you pack this or that" you can add or subtract.

- Fan. With extra batteries
- Flashlight
- Small rope for clothes line, but if we pack the trailer right, there will be plenty of rope
- Hat
- Some scouts like hammocks....please respect other people's stuff....Don't mess with it if they don't give permission. Last year, I saw a portable chair get destroyed in the shower and my hammock failed the strength test....it broke after 8 scouts got in it.
- Use a trunk to pack your gear
- Bring all uniform parts and pieces....belts, socks.
- Sun glasses
- Board games
- Cards
- Musical instrument (gazoo, harmonica, etc.)
- I'll bring a camp radio to listen to camp radio station
- Towels
- USE your scout book to pack with
- All needs to fit in your trunk and have your name on it.

SHOWERING & LATRINES

Scouts have to take a shower. All that dirt and sweat, it's not good.

A shower will cool you off. If it's been hot all day, a cool shower will drop your core temp a degree or two!

A shower will refresh you.

A shower will help you sleep better at night.

Your tent mate will appreciate the fact that you took a shower.

Put clean clothes on after a shower.

At Euchee we have a central shower in the middle of camp....it has hot water occasionally but it depends on when you use it. We have a shower in the campsite that is cold unless you use it in the afternoon, then it is lukewarm.

At Skymont there is no shower in camp, but we could make one!!!
There are two central showers several walking minutes away.

Most boys take showers in mass and wear their bathing suits because it turns into a social fun thing in the campsite. I'm ok with this as long as they clean up their mess and don't get out of control. In the evening, scouts will gather and go to the central showers as a group. That's ok.

Swimming in the lake is good, it will cool you off, but it's not the same as a shower. You still need to take a shower. All lakes have parasites that we must wash off.

Bottom-line, if your scout doesn't take a shower every two days, then it will become a mandatory shower event at my direction and older scout will march them down to the showers.

In the campsite we have the normal camp latrines....a hole in the ground.
There are no bugsthe bugs seem to be smart enough not to hang out around the latrines.

There are spiders and cobwebs, but we clean the latrine every day, so the scouts should be cleaning or sweeping these out.

Central showers have flush johns but they are as clean as you leave them. There are a couple of flush johns around camp, Hinson hall, dining hall (at Euchee).

Holding everything in till you get home isn't good for you! You're going to get a big time stomachache, and be very uncomfortable. Go to the bathroom.

Please give your son the pep talk---please take a shower, and don't be embarrassed about going to the bathroom in the latrines!

Euchee--recommend about \$30-40 for scout camp. Small bills. DO NOT bring \$20s.
Euchee--Some MBs require more money...such as shooting sports. Bring small change. No large bills. This is collected on the first meeting of the MB. Read SM handbook to learn the exact money needed for different MBs.

Older scouts responsible for their money. Lock it up. Don't carry it around. When we're playing dodge ball or manhunt it's going to fall out of your pocket. And if I find it, it goes into the troop misc. account for misc. stuff (watermelons, Gatorade, ice, etc.)

New scouts: we will have a banker. Me. Give me your money in an envelope, with your name on the outside, and the amount of money written on the outside. Small bills. I say again, SMALL bills.

Bank will be opened twice a day, lunch and evening. If you take a \$5 out, and only spend \$2, you are responsible for your change. I will not take it back.
I will NOT open the bank every time you want money. You have to wait until the bank opens.

Euchee--The most popular item at camp was the slurpies. I think about \$2 for drink and cup. Refills .75 cents...don't quote me.

I will give you any left over money when we leave camp.

Bring a lock for your trunk and put valuable stuff in it like your money. Lock it up, don't bring keys, use combo locks. A scout is trustworthy but there's always a couple that don't understand that particular law yet.

I always hear the story about “I lost it, I don’t know where it went”---oh well.....it’s a big camp! Be responsible. Going all week without a slurpie because you lost your money is not fun!

SKYMONT:

Skymont guide says bring about \$75. I can't imagine spending \$75 at camp. For example, a t-shirt that's around \$20, an occasional coke/slurpie or candy bar. Maybe a hiking stick \$20, but that's about it. This is already an expensive event. You're going to need food money while we travel to and from home for lunch and stuff. Be smart. Heck, open the personal management merit badge and plan out your spending.

I don't consider Euchee or Skymont a Merit Badge factory. For the most part you have to do work and pay attention in class. I expect Eagle Required Merit Badges to be harder. They are harder to understand, more work, etc.

Merit Badges—you need book, worksheet, paper and pencils. Skymont specifically says bring your MB book in the guide. We've been sloppy on this!

- Any additional money for MBs,,,,leatherwork, shotgun, rifle, basketry, electronics, space, and a couple more have additional FEES. Check the SM guide I've sent out at least 4 times to you. Skymont has already been paid, but if you do free shoot then you need to put a chit in the trading post. Euchee you pay the instructor the first day
- Bring any additional equipment req'd for MBs...soldering iron for electrics, whittling knife for woodworking
- Any prereq's for MB have a paper signed by SM that you accomplished it.
- Water bottle with name on it. I bring two.
- I also like carrying a Camelbak backpack...it carries my water, and a place I can put my MB books, paper, worksheets, etc. as I walk around camp.

Some MBs are just plain fun....some involve work!

I expect every scout in our troop to Be Prepared (where have you heard that before). I expect you to have a MB book, a MB worksheet, pen/pencil and paper for notes.

I expect you to pay attention in class, be there on time, prepare, ask questions, have fun, volunteer, and practice what you learn. Become a better scout!

We have some MB books that we have started bringing to troop meetings. You need to sign them out. Others can be purchased at the Scout Store in Pensacola. A very few are available at the trading post at Euchee (I'm not sure about Skymont).

Euchee and Skymont: There are 3 periods before lunch; 2 periods after lunch and there are a couple of Merit Badges that meet during free time in the afternoon. Prior to dinner---look at the schedule to figure out where and when you need to be somewhere.

Euchee: There are some MBs that meet after dinner (e.g. fly fishing needs to tie some flies one night, radio needs to do their radio show at night, astronomy meets to look at the stars at night--- listen to your instructors and they will tell you where you need to be.) Weather meets before breakfast.

Some events will conflict with other events. For instance, you may not be able to do the STAFF Hunt because you have to meet in the evening to tie fly-fishing lures. **Pay attention to the posted schedule.**

MOST IMPORTANT---when you go to class they will take roll. You need to be on their sheet. If you don't hear your name called, then you need to have it added to the list. If you come late, then you need to MAKE sure that the instructor marks you as present. There are always one or two scouts that say they were there and they don't get credit because they didn't answer up when roll was called. It's very hard to fix....so pay attention.

If things aren't working out in your MB class. I need to know asap. I had one scout that didn't go to his MB class for two days because he didn't know where it was. I had one scout that went to class, they didn't have his name on the list, so he left and walked around camp instead of getting into another MB class. I can't help, unless you let me know. The older scouts will help the younger scouts.

ATTITUDE:

Having a good attitude in life is half the battle. Just showing up and doing your best is sometime the other half of the battle.

Being prepared when you do show up and having a good attitude when you show up---Both of these spells success.

I've noticed in our troop we have some scouts that are pretty good at "picking" and "egging each other on"---some of this is normal. The key is to know when we go past normal and to stop!!

This getting along takes practice.

It takes "**patience**".

It takes the ability to "**give in**" and "**be tolerant**".

Don't be the instigator.

If you see things getting out of hand, be responsible and stop it!

- A good attitude will help you have fun.
- A good attitude will help you beat the heat, dust, etc.
- A good attitude will help you remember this summer camp!
- A good attitude will help you focus during MB classes.
- A good attitude will help you make more friends.
- A good attitude will help you make it thru the week.
- A good attitude is infectious and will be passed around camp.
- A good attitude describes a good scout!

Hey, what are you going to sit on when at camp? Many of the scouts tried sitting in my CHAIR but were kicked out immediately.

So the lesson is???

- Bring a fold up chair or campstool.
- Put your name on it.
- Take care of it.
- You abuse it and break it....that's life.
- If you try the STRESS test and try to see how many scouts a folding chair will hold, and it breaks at 5. Don't come running to me and telling me that Bubba, Tack, Crain, and Oman broke your chair, just throw it away and figure out what mom and dad are going to say to you when you come home without a chair!

MEDICATION:

Euchee: If your son takes a daily medication, he will have to leave it at the medical building and go there and get it in the morning or evening.

Make sure it is clearly marked. He will not be allowed to self medicate (there are exceptions like inhalers).

Skymont: They say that each troop must have a lock box and the scout and adult must be responsible for the medication. I'll find the lock box. But I'm telling you I'm the worse person in the world to remember to take meds. The scout really has to help me on this by coming by and reminding me. When we develop the routine, I'll get better.

Have meds clearly marked in a bag. I'll have a cooler with ice where we can keep stuff cool.

Please let me know about your son's needs.

NEW SCOUTS

For all the scouts going to Pathfinders or Polaris (Skymont) --new scout camp. Let me try to explain what will happen.

In the morning after breakfast you will all gather. Usually the group is pretty big and you'll be put into your patrols. You'll have an older scout or two as your mentors/teachers, but you will still organize as a patrol. You guys will go over requirements for tenderfoot in the morning. do two MBs in the afternoon.

Those than signed up for second class/first class rank will work 3 MBs in the morn, and meet after lunch to work rank.

Skymont: those working Tenderfoot requirements need to bring a small tent to backpack with on Thursday night. You will need a small backpack or daypack to carry some stuff in like a blanket. If you have already gone on a campout with us, you DO NOT need to do this unless you want to.

Euclaw: Those that need to camp and pitch a tent will go on a hike on Thursday night. Pitch your tent and camp out. Hint...hint...having a backpack really helps. Carrying your tent or sleeping bag in your arms and hiking 1 or 2 miles is NOT fun! It's a short hike, about 1 mile. No need to run out and buy a pack, there are several scouts that have them, and you can borrow. Now is the time to start looking.

Be sure you take your book with you. You need to have your name on it. You need to read it. They may sign things off as you do them. However, the normal way is the leader prepares an accomplishment sheet and it is given to the scoutmaster when you check out. Be sure to ask!

LEADERSHIP

Leadership takes practice!

Scouting and summer camp is that opportunity!!! We can only have one SPL, so how can you lead?

- You can set the example for others to follow
- You can be the first to say, "Hey that's not smart, so let's stop it before someone gets hurt"
- You can be a patrol leader
- You can be the quarter master
- You can lead a lesson in our God and Country church service
- You can volunteer vs being told to do it
- You can practice being a good follower
- You can be PROACTIVE vs. reactive to the situation
- You can have a good attitude
- You can be the troop time keeper
- You can give your buddy a pep talk
- You can help the younger scouts
- You can help the older scouts
- You can help your SM
- You can fill up the water jugs
- You can pick up the trash that MAGICALLY finds our campsite
- You can perform SERVICE
- You can energize others
- You can have FUN!

There's a bunch more opportunities to practice LEADERSHIP. How are you going to contribute? What do YOU think?

HOMESICKNESS

Been there, done that....experienced it, have seen it! Will see it again.

Parents you play a big part of this experience.

- I started talking about being active with the troop and making friends back in March when we started talking about crossovers, new scouts, etc.
- Having a friend to pal around with helps ALOT!
- They gain courage from each other.
- They support each other.
- They should be finding a tent mate that compliments them now!
- I'd rather NOT have brothers tent with each other....I would like them to make new friends.
- Don't send your scout off to camp with a bunch of snacks. They make the scout think about how much they miss home.
- Don't send a letter a day to your scout. It makes them miss home.
- Don't linger when you drop them off. It makes them think of home.
- Encourage your son to do their best! To have Fun! To come back with some stories to tell you!
- Let them know that it will go quick.
- Don't make a lot of promises to do things when you see them in a week, they ponder this the entire time!
- Don't let them take their cell phone with them....the adult leaders have them.
- Let them know, its normal to be a little down....pick themselves up by their boot straps and get on with it.
- Tell them to go do something, go to the trading post, go swimming, go look for bugs, go take a shower.

At Camp Euchee we have some "home sick pills" that seem to work miracles....we can always resort to one of these if it gets really bad. I'll ask the camp if I can get some and take to Skymont with me!