

What to Buy a Boy Scout

- Rain gear...lightweight jacket & pants. The jacket needs a good hood and should be a little on the large size to allow for layering.
- Boots... but good fitting cross-trainers are OK for day hikes. Boots are required for hiking with a backpack. Allow for growing feet. Check boots for fit before any hikes.
- Gloves...POLARTEC makes good lightweight ones. They still keep you warm when wet. Work gloves are useful for service projects.
- Compass...not too fancy. We're just learning. Older Scouts should get quality compasses.
- Backpack...external frame gives you more places to attach things and is more adjustable for growth than an internal frame which fits more closely with usually just one big compartment. It must also have enough room for the Scout's share of the Patrol gear and tent.
- Daypack...room for lunch, and 'Scout essentials'. CAMELBAKs carry up to 100 oz of water and are very popular. They come in various sizes. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED
- Sleeping bag...rated at 15 degrees or colder, lightweight & backpackable. "Down" requires greater care and is of no use when wet. A light, well made, synthetic bag will do nicely.
- Sleeping pad...closed cell for winter camping. Personal preference for the remainder of the year. A 'Z rest' is easy for small hands to fold up.
- Layered clothing...POLARTEC pullover or vest, polypro or anything he'll think is "cool" enough and will wear. Think light and packable. Too big is always better than too small.
- Socks...in most cases anything but cotton (holds in moisture-can cause blisters).
- Flashlight...Not too big. Something lightweight with an LCD bulb(s). A small light with a red or blue beam won't wreck night vision and is required for all backpacking campouts.
- NALGENE type bottle, one quart. More than one is useful.
- Utensils for eating & cooking, plastic/LEXAN plate & bowl with a mesh bag (not a metal mess kit). A SPORK replaces a spoon and fork.
- Scout pants...functional, "zipoff" pants which can be used for hiking as well as Courts of Honor.
- UNDER ARMOUR/polypro type underwear... Hurrah for non-chaff hiking.

Great Items for Stocking Stuffers

- Nylon straps...various lengths for attaching items to packs. Replaces ropes, Bungee cords and string, which should not be used.
- Zipper pulls...compass, thermometer, flashlight, tweezers, flint & steel, P38 can opener.
- First aid supplies...restock old or used items, check expiration dates on Neosporin & wetwipes, add new items like different types of bandages.
- Equipment repair items (tape, patches, pins etc), bug repellent-with Deet, water purification tablets, parachute cord, carabiners/'D1 rings, packs of hand warmers are great. Extra batteries are always needed. Two-way radios are always fun to have.
- PURELL, instant hand sanitizer, 1 or 2-oz bottle. Use before handling food.

Whatever you buy consider the weight and usefulness. If you buy magazine subscriptions you might want to look at BACKPACKER.

Don't go overboard on knife buying. A small pocketknife is OK. (VICTORTNOX, Boy Scout, 'TINKER' or 'MECHANIC' are both very useful knives)