

Snow Camping 2009

Introduction – Clothing and Personal Gear

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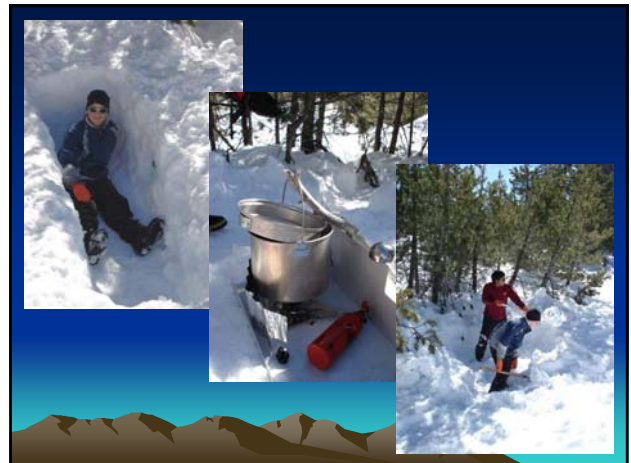
Snow camping can be . . .

- Fun
- Enjoyable
- Challenging
- A learning experience
- Opportunity for team work
- Safe

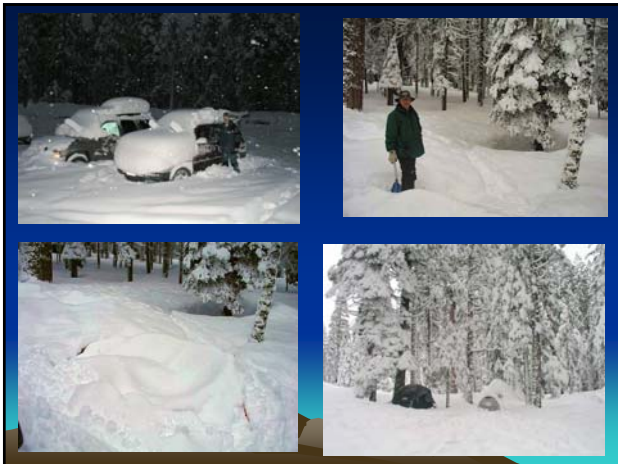
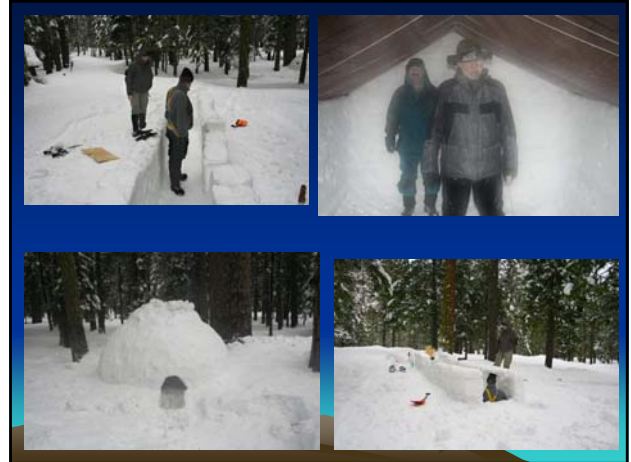
Successful Snow Camping

- What's important for snow camping is to "be prepared" (scout motto)
- Trained leaders
- Scout skills
- Always having a "Plan B"
- Proper gear

Scout Skills



Scout Leader Training - Okpik



Keep Warm with "COLD"

C - Clean

- Trapped/dead air spaces = insulation
- Keep layers clean and fluffy. Dirt, grime, and perspiration can mat down air spaces.

O - Overheating

- Avoid overheating by unzipping jacket and vents, and adjusting clothing layers based on outside temperature and your level of activity.
- Excessive sweating can dampen your clothing and cause chilling later on.

L - Loose Layers

- A steady flow of warm blood is essential to keep all parts of your body heated.
- Wear several loosely fitting layers of clothing and footwear that will allow maximum insulation without impeding your circulation.

D - Dry

- A waterproof outer layer (ideally breathable or vented) will keep the water out but... wear layers of breathable clothes so body heat can drive perspiration out.
- Damp or wet clothing can cause your body to cool quickly, possibly leading to frostbite, and/or hypothermia.
- AVOID cotton clothing that absorbs moisture and dries slowly.

Best Clothing Materials

- Wool clothing is ideal in cold weather
 - it is durable and water resistant, and even when soaked .
 - makes excellent blankets, socks, hats, mittens, sweaters, and even pants. Army surplus stores have good wool clothing for winter camping.
 - If wool irritates your skin, you may be able to wear wool blends or wear it over clothing made of other fabrics.
- Many synthetics are also good in winter for use as wicking layer, windbreakers and insulation. Dries quickly.
- Down is a great insulation but loses its insulation performance when wet.
- Cotton should NOT be used. It holds onto water and dries slowly.
- Remember that winter camping is not a fashion show. Whatever combination of clothing it takes to keep you warm should be worn, regardless of how it looks.

Layering

- The best method of wearing clothing is layering.
- Choose loose fitting clothing in as many layers as you can. The air space becomes a good insulator.
- The layers can be taken off or put on, depending on your activity level, temperature, wind, and precipitation.
- Several shirts, a sweater, and a jacket will allow you to adjust your system in many more ways than will a single heavy coat.

Layering (cont.)

- Wicking layer
 - Synthetic underwear and “long johns” (e.g. Poly-Pro)
- Warmth Layer (2 or more layers)
 - Synthetic or wool shirt
 - Fleece or wool top
 - Optional sweater to go immediately over shirt
- Weather Layer
 - Waterproof shell/jacket. Breathable fabric or/and vents desirable.
 - Down or synthetic-insulation-filled garment in camp and during rest stops in cold weather.
 - If the weather is wet as well as cold, another pile or fleece jacket could be substituted for the down garment under the outer shell.

Footwear

- At least two pair of socks are recommended as long as they aren't too tight. 2 thin pair are better than 1 thick pair.
- Wool or a wool blend is best.
- For wet conditions: put plastic bags between the two layers of socks. Thin synthetic socks underneath bag with heavy wool socks on top.
- Good waterproof winter boots . Plus an extra pair of boots, good sneakers or mukluks.
 - Avoid moon boots. Not designed for heavy activity in snow.
- Gaiters - Wraps around top of boots to ensure that snow does not go down into boots or up pant legs.



Gloves/Mittens

- Mittens that allow your fingers to be in direct contact with one another can keep your hands warmer than gloves that isolate each finger.
- A good pair of gloves are a must however for many tasks around camp that would be too cumbersome with mittens.
- Extra gloves and/or mittens are a must as gloves/mittens tend to get very wet.
- For snow work, wear a rubber gloves with an additional liner or thin gloves.

Hats

- Insulated hat/cap for daytime
 - A bill or brim is helpful
 - Wool cap or Benie for sleeping
- Balaclava
 - Needed for severe wind and cold.
 - Alternative is a scarf that can be wrapped around neck, chin, etc.



Eye & Skin Protection

- Sun glasses (or ski goggles) designed to block UV-A and UV-B.
 - Side shields are desirable.
 - Required to prevent “snow blindness”.
 - Polycarbonate plastic absorbs all UV radiation, while prescription-quality glass absorb ~85 % of UV
 - Goggles tend to fog up easier.
- Sun screen. SPF 30 or higher.
 - Applied every 2-3 hours.
 - 30% more radiation at 7000' plus up to 80% reflection off snow
- Chapstick.

Snow Shelters and Tents

- Believe it or not!!! A snow shelter will keep you warmer than a tent (35-40° vs. overnight ambient temp).
- A snow shelter will provide more protection against wind and precipitation .
- A tent takes much less time/effort to set up (15 minutes vs. 2-4 hours).

Sleeping System

- Must keep dry and well-insulated
- Plastic tarp for under and over sleeping bag but don't cover head (respiratory moisture build-up)
- Mylar foam pad to reflect heat
- Foam pad for insulation
- Synthetic sleeping bag rated to 20° or lower (down loses insulation performance when wet)
- Sleeping bag liner or wool blanket will give another 5-15° degrees of insulation

Some Suggested Stores

- Thrift stores (e.g. Goodwill)
- REI (Concord)
- Sports Basement (Walnut Creek)
- Any Mountain (Concord, Dublin)
- On-line:
 - Campmor.com
 - Sierratradingpost.com
 - Backcountry.com