

# Troop 272

Nashua, NH

## Scouting Gear Guide



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Document summary: This document includes a discussion of various camping and backpacking related topics and individual scout equipment recommendations. It also includes a personal equipment list for each scout as well as a patrol equipment list that individual patrols can use to make sure they remember patrol gear for any backpacking trip. It is a resource to both scouts and their parents.

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## Daypacks

**The first piece of essential gear that a scout will need is a large daypack.** By large, we mean much bigger than your typical school backpack because in boy scouts, we teach your son to carry a daypack whenever he enters the woods -- and that pack is filled with the “25 essentials” - everything he might possibly need to be prepared for the day as well as for extreme circumstances like getting lost and getting found.

There are two types: top loading and panel loading. Panel loading prevents digging around for gear because you can lay the pack down and open it up. Top loaders can usually expand more if you have to stuff in some extra gear. Personal choice on which to select.



The sweet spot for most hiking and multisport daypacks is size 24-30 liters (around 1,830 cubic inches). Whatever model you consider, it should have some decently padded straps, a waste belt, and some external pockets for keeping smaller gear like a map, compass, whistle, sunscreen, etc. Osprey Talon 22 or 30 is a good choice, but any of the same size will do.

## Backpacks

**The next piece of essential gear is a “real” backpacking backpack.** If you don't backpack yourself and don't have time to do research, I HIGHLY recommend you go to someplace like Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS) to buy one. Just walk in, tell them your son is a new scout and that you need advice, and they will give you good advice usually from employees who actually backpack. See below, I highly recommend an external frame pack made by Kelty.



There are two major types of backpacks: internal frame and external frame. It is up to you which type that you choose. Internal frames are fancier looking and come in many styles and colors, but generally the drawbacks of cheaper internal frame packs are that you can't carry as much with them, they don't ventilate your back well, and they aren't as adjustable as external frame packs. These days, with the backcountry—and the pages of magazines—dominated by internal frames and fancy ultralight gear, external-frame packs are considered more worthy of a museum than the wilderness. But that is far from the truth. That is why....

**The Scoutmaster Troop 272 recommends that scouts use external frame packs so they can pack extra last minute patrol gear & food, (which most scouts forget about until the hike is about to start).**

As of 2021, I've noticed lately they are getting harder to find, but a classic is still available!

Sports & Fitness › Hunting & Fishing › Tactical & Personal Defense › Tactical Bags & Packs › Tactical Backpacks



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#### Kelty Yukon 48L Backpack

★★★★★ 43 ratings | 8 answered questions

Price: **\$179.95 & FREE Shipping.** Details  
FREE Returns

**Pay \$29.99/month for 6 months** (plus S&H, tax) with 0% interest  
equal monthly payments when you're approved for an Amazon Store Card.

**Color:** Ponderosa Pine

**Size:** Small/Medium

**Color** Ponderosa Pine

**Brand** Kelty

**Capacity** 48 Liters

**Item Weight** 4.75 Pounds

**Strap Type** Shoulder Strap, Waist Strap, Adjustable

#### About this item

- Yukon's popular with scouts and young adults as they transition into a full sized pack with great features from our full sized packs, it's Kelty Built
- Tradition meets feature rich pack reliable external frame design for your next adventure
- Features: Top Loading, Top Lid converts to Sling Pack, Zippered side pockets, front pocket w/ organization, Stretch front pouch, Hydration Compatible
- Suspension Features: Adjustable suspension, External Frame, Dual density foam waist belt, Padded shoulder straps, stabilizer straps,

## **Other tips:**

**Use a Backpack that Fits:** youths and teens who try to use adult backpacks are in for a miserable experience. These packs don't properly adjust to fit them and distribute weight properly. As a Webelos, my son got an Kelty Yukon external frame backpack and we loaded tested it during summer with a 6-mile trip in the white mountains. He loved it. I got in on sale for \$149 – about the price of 3 video games. The nice part is that it adjusts so he was able to use it his entire scouting career.

**How to Pack a Backpack.** When packing your backpack there is a general rule: place heavy items toward the top, lighter items down the bottom. This typically means tent on the top (near shoulders), sleeping pad on the very bottom, and sleeping bag inside the pack in the middle (some packs come with a sleeping bag compartment). Other heavier items such as water, camp stove and fuel, and food near the top of your pack and close to your back. Place the lightest items, such as fleece, and rain/wind gear at the bottom, away from your back. Medium-weight items, such as utensils, clothing, and lighter foods can either go near the top away from your back, or near the bottom close to your back. In the outside pockets, place miscellaneous items that you might need to access quickly: map, compass, knife, flashlight, fire starters/matches, etc. Make sure you pack a trash bag or two for garbage at your campsites and wet clothing.

**Line the main compartment of your pack with a garbage bag with the top folded over.** Put the heaviest items closer to the small of your back and near the top. Keep your rain gear, snacks, and whistle easily available. Use zip-top bags and stuff sacks liberally. Keep all of your smellable items in one or two places so that you don't forget any when you need to place them in the bear keg/bag.

## **Backpacks (continued)**

**NOTE: A backpack should not weight more than 20% of your total body weight.** This means that larger scouts may have the honor of carrying equipment for the younger scouts.

Finally remember this fact: Whatever you pack, you have to carry on your back for however long you have to hike. SO PACK LIGHTLY!

## Mess Kits

PLEASE DON'T BUY METAL MESS KITS OR UTENSILS (1970's technology). Today, these made-in-china cheap sets don't last, fall apart (bolts get lost), and are heavy. Instead....What you want to buy is the sea-to-summit x bowl (or set) and matching spork. Weights  $\frac{1}{4}$  of what a metal kit and utensil set weights and I've had mine for 8 years. They also fold flat and take up less room on your pack.



## A GOOD ORIENTEERING COMPASS

Time to ditch all the cheap compasses kids get in cub scouts for an orienteering compass. DO NOT BUY MILITARY OR CAMPING/HUNTING COMPASSES and stick with brand name compasses. Suunto and Silva make the best compasses and you want a compass with a 2-3 inch CLEAR plastic base.



### Explorer 2.0 Compass, Clear, One Size

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★★★★★ 74 ratings | 8 answered questions

**Amazon's Choice** for "silva explorer 2.0 compass"

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- Red/black N/S lines in capsule ensures easy and safe settling
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## Food & Stoves

You don't eat the same way you do at home when you are backpacking. You want food that is lightweight, easy to prepare, and creates little trash. No cans, bottles, or big boxes of stuff. You also don't want sloppy foods that are hard to cleanup!

You can reduce food weight and volume by packing primarily dehydrated meals. These are quick to prepare and you can eat them right out of the pouch they come in with just a cup of boiled water added. Drawback is that they are expensive. But you may want to consider them for at least 1 meal.

Avoid excess raw meats, especially on long trips. Pack calorie dense food, but try to eat from a variety of food groups. Eat a lot of carbohydrates and protein. Since you'll sweat a lot, make sure you get sufficient salt. Most food packaging is bulkier than necessary and less waterproof than you'll prefer. Before you go, divide up your food and repackage it into zip-top bags.

### **Consider the following foods (sample menu items):**

- Breakfast - oatmeal, granola or cereal bars, nuts, and dried fruit.
- Lunch - bagels, hard cheese, pepperoni, crackers, peanut butter, summer sausage, pre-cooked bacon, raisins, nuts, and apples.
- Dinner – One pot meals that combine rice with chicken, kielbasa, and veggies. Instant soup, and quesadillas. AVOID: Pasta and macaroni and cheese (where do you drain water?) Don't forget dessert--pudding or cookies are great! Drink tea or instant drinks that come in handy premeasured tubes.

Example: Spanish Jambalaya (feeds 6)

1 package Kielbasa, 1 bag frozen peas and carrots, 2 boxes spanish rice

Boil rice according to box instructions. When rice is done (after 20 minutes) add chopped Kielbasa and bag of frozen peas. Let mixture simmer for 1-2 minutes. Eat.

Example: Dehydrated meal

- Pad Thai (Thai noodles with peanut sauce)

Troop 272 owns three jetboil stove cooking systems (GCS). You want to make sure you plan your meals so that you can use these stoves. Lightweight Jetboil PCS systems are also great and can be purchased for your own personal use, but the troop does not provide these stoves.



GCS System



PCS System

## Sleeping Bags

The decision is pretty simple actually. Do you wanna save money and are ok with bulky bags that are hard to pack? Buy a synthetic. Or do you want to save weight, make backpacking more enjoyable, and take up less room? Go with down.

Synthetic insulations (like Primaloft, Climashield, and the plethora of proprietary insulations) are a safer choice for scouts who often find themselves in wet conditions, such as backpacking Washington's Olympic coast with a tarp for shelter. But we don't do that much and young scouts often struggle with these bulky bags that are hard to repack.

Personally, I'm a down bag snob. And it's not just the weight—a high quality down bag can be over a pound lighter than a synthetic with the same temperature rating—it's the cozy factor. I always sleep warmer, and warm up quicker, in a down bag. And now that you can get awesome waterproof stuffsacks—such as Sea to Summit's eVent Compression Dry Sacks (Editors' Choice Award winner in 2007) you at least won't have to worry about your down bag getting wet in transit.

For back packing, I recommend that you buy or borrow a DOWN-FILLED mummy bag. The main difference between down and synthetic is that down will pack



down smaller and be lighter for the same temperature rating. However, care should be taken to make sure the bag doesn't get wet because the bag will lose some of its insulating value when wet (see the importance of a sleeping pad section below). Synthetic bags are fine, they will just be heavier for your son to carry and for smaller scouts, this may present a real problem. Sleeping bags are sold and priced by comfort rating. It should be rated for at least 20°F or below. Mummy bags have a hood that extends up over your head and allow you to close off the bag so that nothing but your nose and mouth is exposed. The more baffles the bag has, the more likely the fill will stay in place for years to come.

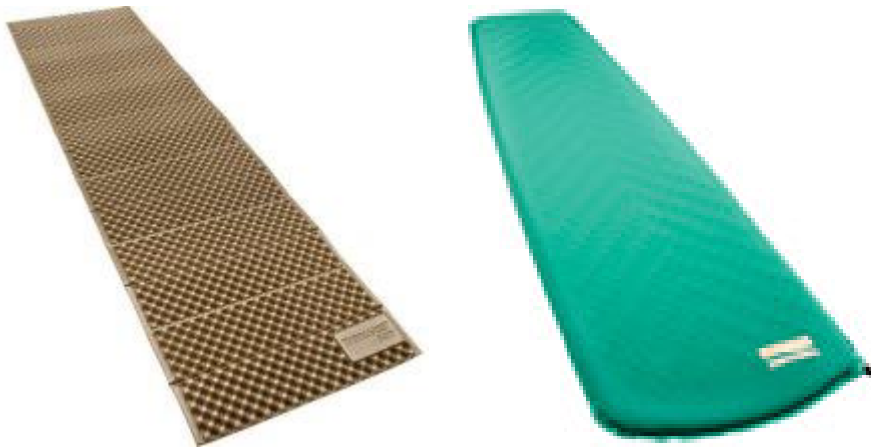
Some of the best places to look for these sleeping bags are [campmor.com](http://campmor.com), [sierratradingpost.com](http://sierratradingpost.com), and [rei-outlet.com](http://rei-outlet.com). Some examples of sleeping bags that fit the above criteria are:

| EXAMPLE SLEEPING BAGS                       | Size    | Price | Weight    |
|---|---------|-------|-----------|
| Campmor Goose Down 20 °F Mummy Sleeping Bag | Regular | \$110 | 2 lb 6 oz |
| Kelty Light Year+25 Sleeping Bag            | Regular | \$129 | 2 lb      |

## Sleeping Pads

A sleeping pad will keep you from feeling the rocks underneath your tent, will insulate you from the cold ground, and keep dampness from getting into your sleeping bag. It is essential if it will be chilly at night. Your sleeping bag's filler will be compacted under your weight so it will only protect the top of you – meaning that the primary insulation under you is your sleeping pad.

Sleeping pads come in two types: Self-inflating foam pad OR closed cell foam pad. Each pad has an associated “R” (resistance) factor associated with it. Just like home insulation “R” factors, the higher the “R”, the warmer the pad. Closed cell foam pads are the cheapest and lightest, which is ideal for backpacking, but you will sacrifice comfort. Self-inflating pads are more comfortable, but they tend to be a little heavier and they can puncture under heavy boy scout abuse – although my boys have had theirs for 5 years without incident. The most popular brand of pad is ThermoRest. Don't skimp here. Buy the best you can afford.



Examples: Closed Cell Pad and Open Cell inflatable pad (green)

Therm-a-Rest Z Lite Sol Mattress

<http://amzn.to/2fyiqJ7>

Therm-a-Rest ProLite Mattress

<http://amzn.to/2fygzUT>

## **Outer wear and rain gear**

This clothing layer is designed to protect you from wind, rain, and snow. This layer is sometimes called your shell garment. There are two main types of outerwear: ones that are windproof but not waterproof, and ones that are both windproof and waterproof.

### ***Windproof but NOT Waterproof***

Every Scout needs an outer layer to block the wind. If the wind can blow through your insulation layers unobstructed, you can lose a lot of body heat. Another way to think about this is if you have a good windproof layer, you need less insulation - less weight to carry - to stay warm. This layer in its simplest and lightest form is a very light nylon jacket and perhaps even nylon pants without many pockets or other bells and whistles. They are sometimes referred to as windbreakers or wind shirts. Most discount department stores, for example, carry many different windbreakers that are either lined or unlined that are very inexpensive. The unlined are lighter in weight, the lined are warmer, your choice. Just make sure there is no cotton in the lining.

Wind blocking clothing will really be appreciated when hiking in a buggy area since it also helps block mosquitoes. Some manufacturers are modifying the wind blocking fabrics to make them water resistant. For a mild rain shower, a water resistant jacket is the only jacket that you will need to wear while hiking.

### ***Windproof and Waterproof***

The cheapest and lightest windproof and waterproof rainwear is a large poncho. I like them because when I'm hiking, I can slip it on to both cover myself and my backpack all at once. Only drawback: they trap in moisture and you can get pretty hot wearing them and they are not totally windproof. But for new scouts just getting into back packing, I don't recommend more than this.

As an alternative, many modern fabrics are waterproof and breathable and keep rain out, and also allow some moisture vapor from perspiration out. The most renowned of these fabrics is Gore-Tex. There are literally hundreds of these types of fabrics now. These fabrics tend to be very expensive. The place where Gore-Tex really shines is winter backpacking in the snow and ice. These jackets and pants really do a good job of keeping you dry but cost multiple hundreds of dollars. Because of the high costs, I do not recommend these jackets for new Scouts. Once they have been backpacking for a few years and have stopped growing, this may be an option. The Gore-Tex type jackets can usually be found on sale at numerous web sites.

## Footwear

### Hiking Boots

Hiking boots are the most important hiking gear purchase you will make. And not all brands or models are created equal. The right hiking footwear will carry you far, fast and comfortably. It should be as light and comfortable as possible for the type of hiking you're doing, while also keeping your feet dry, warm, and well-protected.

Lightweight trail shoes or light hikers – originally design for day hikes only, these shoes are ok for shorter hikes and small 1-day backpacking trips, but offer little in the way of ankle support that you need for longer hikes with a heavy pack. If you use these, you want to make sure that they are waterproof.

Backpacking Hiking Boots are designed for hiking over rougher ground while wearing a moderately heavy backpack. They come up over your ankle and lace up for extra support. Backpacking boots are more durable and supportive than lightweight shoes and boots. You want to be sure that your boots are waterproof (look for Gore-Tex symbol) and insulated for colder hikes. Work boots are not hiking boots!



When trying on these boots, be sure to wear the socks you plan on wearing for hiking. This will ensure that they are roomy enough to be comfortable.

### Hiking Socks

No white cotton socks unless you want cold wet feet. It is best to wear two thin layers of socks to prevent blisters and ensure a happy hiking day. The primary sock layer (the one next to the skin) should be made of synthetic materials or silk. These are commonly called “liner” socks. The outer layer should be a lightweight wool blend like SmartWool or Wigwam. These will wick away moisture and provide insulation even when damp. They also both dry much faster than cotton socks. Don't skimp here. But the best you can. Make sure you take these socks with you when you try on hiking boots!

## Jackets

When you see “Jacket” on the packing list, the average around-the-town warm jacket you wear around Nashua is both heavy and bulky. To lighten your load, buy a down packable jacket. This one packs into it’s own pouch with comes sewn into the jacket. Carry it in plastic bag to keep it dry! You need a jacket on about 80% of our trips.

[HOME](#) > [MEN](#) > [MEN'S JACKETS](#) > [DOWN JACKETS](#) > [EMS® Men's Feather Pack Jacket](#)



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## Patrol Backpacking Requirements

In addition to packing for yourself, your patrol will need to carry all the items that the group will need for the trip. This will include tents, stoves, food, cooking water, and any cooking utensils you'll need for the trip. Remember this fact as you plan your menu...if you stick to simple meals, you'll have a minimal amount of patrol gear to carry.

Patrol needs:

- Tents.
  - How many do we need?
  - Who will carry them this trip?
- Stoves:
  - Does our menu require them?
  - Who has them?
  - How many needed?
  - Do we all know how to use them?
- Cooking utensils?
- Menu?
  - What's on the menu?
  - What's on the shopping list?
  - Who is doing the food shopping?
- Cooking water?
  - Does everyone need to bring an extra container of patrol water?
  - If not, how many do you need?

## Individual Equipment List

This is an actual list of the items you'll need and the approximate weight.

| Item                              | Pounds ounces |     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----|
| Backpack                          | 5             | 0   |
| Sleeping bag                      | 4             | 0   |
| Mattress/Sleeping pad             | 2             | 0   |
| Patrol gear (tent, food etc)      | 5             | 0   |
| Full water bottle                 | 1             | 6   |
| Flashlight                        |               | 4   |
| First aid Kit                     |               | 9   |
| 2 extra AA batteries (flashlight) |               | 2   |
| Trail mix                         |               | 6   |
| Compass + Matches+ Whistle        |               | 3   |
| Firestarter                       |               | 1   |
| Poncho                            | 1             | 2   |
| Pocketknife                       |               | 3   |
| Mess Kit (pot pan cup)            | 1             | 7   |
| Fork Spoon (heavy plastic)        |               | 1   |
| Toilet Articles (TP, etc)         |               | 6   |
| Rope (50 ft. 3x16)                |               | 4   |
| Half Roll Toilet Paper            |               | 4   |
| Extra Socks                       |               | 5   |
| Long Underwear                    | 1             | 0   |
| Wind pants                        |               | 5   |
| Hat and Gloves                    |               | 6   |
| Warm Jacket                       | 2             | 0   |
| <b>Total</b>                      | 19            | 102 |

(potentially carried by older scouts)

**Total pounds approx. 26 lbs including Patrol gear. Bring less patrol gear and you lighten your pack!**

Optional Recommended Gear:

Watershoes/Crocs – good for campsite and water crossings!

Water filter – safely refresh water supply on trail.

Waterproof backpack cover (silicon) – keep your gear dry on trail or in camp