

Essential Camping Checklist

A practical pre-trip checklist for safer, more comfortable camping. Check only what fits your destination, weather, trip length, and campsite.

TRIP: _____	DATES: _____
DESTINATION: _____	FORECAST CHECKED: []
WATER AVAILABLE: [] Yes [] No	FIRE RULES CHECKED: []

SHELTER & SLEEP

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Tent and rainfly | ☐ Tent stakes and guylines |
| ☐ Groundsheet or footprint | ☐ Sleeping bag |
| ☐ Sleeping pad or air mattress | ☐ Pillow |
| ☐ Extra blanket if needed | ☐ Tent / gear repair kit |

WATER & HYDRATION

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Drinking water | ☐ Reusable water bottles |
| ☐ Extra / backup water | ☐ Portable water filter or treatment method |

CAMP KITCHEN & FOOD

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Camp stove | ☐ Stove fuel |
| ☐ Lighter or waterproof matches | ☐ Cooking pot / frying pan |
| ☐ Cooking utensils | ☐ Plates or bowls |
| ☐ Eating utensils | ☐ Cups or mugs |
| ☐ Can opener | ☐ Knife and cutting board |
| ☐ Cooler | ☐ Food and snacks |
| ☐ Food-storage containers | ☐ Biodegradable soap and sponge |
| ☐ Trash bags | |

CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Weather-appropriate layers | ☐ Warm insulating layer |
| ☐ Rain jacket / shell | ☐ Hat for sun or warmth |
| ☐ Gloves if needed | ☐ Hiking shoes or boots |
| ☐ Camp shoes | ☐ Extra socks |
| ☐ Extra underwear | ☐ Swimsuit if appropriate |

FIRST AID & PERSONAL CARE

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ First-aid kit | ☐ Prescription medications |
| ☐ Personal medical supplies | ☐ Sunscreen |
| ☐ Insect repellent | ☐ Hand sanitizer |
| ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste | ☐ Toilet paper |
| ☐ Towel / washcloth | ☐ Personal hygiene products |
| ☐ Glasses / contacts and solution | ☐ Lip balm |

LIGHTING & POWER

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Headlamp | ☐ Flashlight |
| ☐ Camping lantern | ☐ Spare batteries |
| ☐ Portable power bank or power station | ☐ Charging cables |

NAVIGATION & COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Paper map | ☐ Compass |
| ☐ Fully charged phone | ☐ Offline maps downloaded |
| ☐ GPS device if appropriate | ☐ Emergency whistle |

■ Satellite communicator / PLB for remote trips

■ Trip plan left with a trusted person

TOOLS & REPAIR

■ Multi-tool

■ Utility knife where appropriate

■ Duct tape

■ Paracord

■ Zip ties

■ Work gloves

■ Tent-pole repair sleeve

■ Small shovel where permitted

SAFETY & EMERGENCY

■ Emergency blanket

■ Backup fire-starting method

■ Extra food

■ Extra water

■ Emergency contact information

■ Local map

■ Check current fire restrictions

■ Check wildlife / food-storage rules

CAMP COMFORT

■ Camp chairs

■ Folding table if needed

■ Hammock where permitted

■ Binoculars / camera

■ Books or playing cards

■ Journal and pen

■ Daypack

■ Trekking poles

CLEANUP & LEAVE NO TRACE

■ Trash bags

■ Reusable dishes and utensils

■ Cleaning supplies

■ Food-storage containers

■ Pack out leftover food

■ Pack out all trash

■ Confirm local waste-disposal rules

FINAL 3 QUESTIONS: What conditions am I expecting? What could realistically go wrong? What would I wish I had if it did?

Use this checklist as a planning tool, not a one-size-fits-all packing list. Always follow campground, public-land, fire, wildlife, and local safety requirements.

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