

CONCEPT

This book helps Scouts plan and prepare the meals for their Patrol (5-8 Scouts)¹. Scouts should become familiar with different methods to prepare meals (open fire, coals, dutch oven, propane, lightweight stoves, etc). This book is meant to be a beginning that Scouts can easily expand upon, to make it much more robust—I suggest adding to it after any campout where you did a new meal or method that was well-received! This book will be kept by the Troop Librarian.



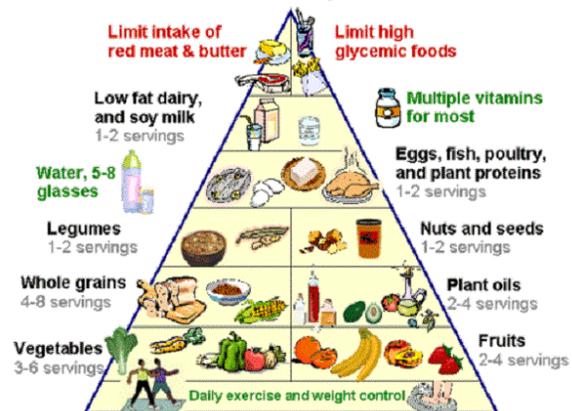
WHAT IS A MEAL?

A meal provides a balanced diet of food (meats/seafood, vegetables, beans, peas, whole grains, fruits, dairy, nuts, seeds, etc) and drink (water!!, milk) that will provide the nutrients energy needed to get through the day's activities. But a meal is also fun—make your patrol stand-out by having new and different things to eat; don't be the patrol that always has the same things, the same way.

If a Scout in your patrol just won't eat something (raw tomato, etc), try to accommodate them—but often there is another way to prepare it that will taste good to them (spaghetti sauce, etc). However, some people have food allergies (nuts, etc), and it is really important to know that before buying or fixing meals—in camping environments, avoid even having those kinds of foods around at all.

WARNING: We eat way too much salt, fat, added sugar, and processed grains/food. Limit those!

New Food Pyramid



HOW MUCH IS A MEAL?

Here you need to use common sense. If this meal will be before or after strenuous activity (canoeing, swimming, hiking, etc) then you will want a slightly larger meal. If this meal is right before you bug out of camp (Sunday breakfast), then you want a lighter meal. In general, use your hands as a guide—a

¹ Adults don't camp or eat with Scout Patrols, but instead with other Adults and Scouters. They intervene only when the *safety or health* of a Scout is at stake. The Scout Patrol Leader is responsible for seeing that all arrangements for patrol cooking are completed and the Senior Patrol Leader ensures the Patrol Leaders are successful. The ScoutMaster or their designated adult leader may mentor (demonstrate once) or offer advice (talk to) the Patrol Leader, Grubmaster, or Scouts, but they do not do the cooking or cleanup for the Patrol.

portion of meat that is about the size of one hand, plus veggies/fruit/etc that fits in the other hand is about right. You may want some kind of small snack for between meals—an apple, trail mix, etc.

When you are serving your meal, you need to have a plan to control portions. Picky eaters may pass by some items, but load up on others—which would mean that the kitchen will run out of some food and Scouts later in the line won't get balanced meals. The solution isn't to force food on Scouts who won't eat it—instead, limit how much each Scout gets when first served. The Patrol Leader needs to be on the lookout for Scouts who don't eat well, and privately encourage them to eat a balanced meal. If they won't, then those unserved portions can be made available as seconds once all Scouts have been served. If a Scout doesn't eat well for more than a meal, let the ScoutMaster know!

WHAT SHOULD MY MEAL BE?

Meal planning is an acquired skill—the more you do it, the better you will get at it. The good news is there is no end of help—googling “Camping Recipes” should return over 22 *Million* websites containing great ideas. Does your recipe call for doing something new to you (like cooking with a dutch oven)? Googling videos for camping recipes gives over 331,000 videos (with over 203,00 teaching dutch oven cooking!).

However, there are some tricky parts to outdoor meal planning:

First, you need to know what environment you will be in. For example, will you have the Scout Trailer and a full troop kitchen? Will you just be out with your Patrol and it's Patrol box? Will you be backpacking or canoeing and only carrying light gear? Will you need to “eat on the go” for some meals—where you need to limit utensils, mess kits, cleaning, etc? If it will rain, don't expect a campfire!

Second, you will probably want simple meals—about 6 - 7 ingredients per meal². The more ingredients, the more purchases you have to make—which makes budgeting hard for Patrol-sized meals. “Keep it Simple.”

Third, avoid meals with really long preparation times. For example, I love smoked brisket...but I'm not going to watch over a smoker all day on a campout! Since Scouts have to cook, eat, and clean up -- and this meal has to fit between other activities -- you want to pick meals that can be fixed in less than an hour. Tip: while we usually do all the preparation and cooking on a campout, you can split this up and have some of it done before camping: for example, dice the onions or peel & slice the potatoes at home and put them in a ziplock bag. This tip is really helpful if you need to limit clean-up.



² For example, “Hamburger, Buns, Cheese, Chips, Lettuce, Onion, Condiments, plus water” or “Ground Beef, Tortilla, Eggs, Cheese, Onions, Salsa, Banana, plus Juice”

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Fourth, Can you keep food cold—how cool, and for how long? Cheese can get a little warm, but you don't want raw chicken to be stored warm (google "food spoilage"). Food has a "Danger Zone": 41 – 140 Degrees Farenheit. Food kept in these temperatures (and especially between 70-114 Degrees) will spoil quickly... The Danger Zone has a "two-hour rule": foods left in these temperatures for over two hours should not be considered safe. If you have a closed cooler full of ice, the temperature will be about 32 Degrees. If you have a little ice and the cooler keeps getting opened, then you will have food in the Danger Zone—be careful! Rather than buy a small bag of ice for a small cooler full of food, consider deep freezing gallon jugs of water and using a bigger cooler. The large jugs will melt slower than small ice cubes, and you won't have as big a mess of water in the cooler. Another solution is "Dry Ice"—this is Carbon Dioxide ("CO2"), not "ice"—and it's temperature is *Minus* 100 Degrees Farenheit! Going really cold might seem like a better idea, but it brings it's own problems—you can easily freeze all of your food solid, and it is very dangerous to touch. It can be bought at places like Vogt Oil in Belleville or GFS Marketplace in Fairview Heights. It is sold in 10 pound blocks (about the size of a box of popsickles), for about a dollar a pound. You need 10 pounds of Dry Ice per cooler per 24 hours. Consider keeping the "extra" dry ice in a small cooler, and cycle it into the food cooler as you need it to keep from having frozen dinners.

Tips for Dry Ice:

Adult use only!

WEAR GLOVES, have a safety buddy

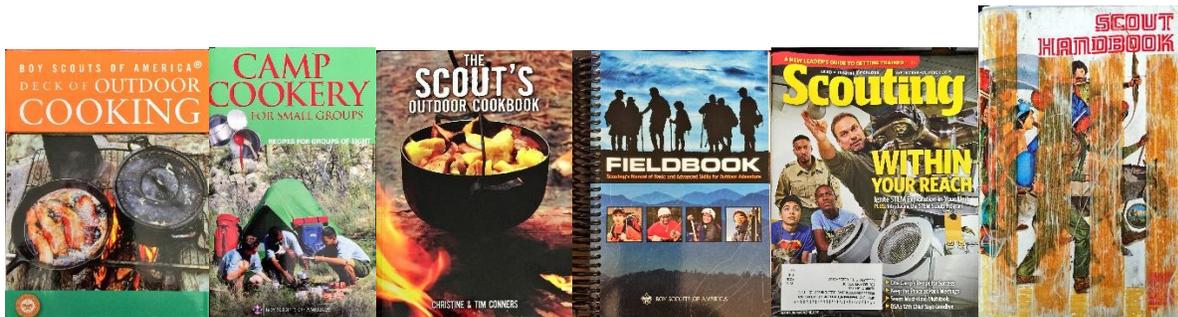
- It will burn your skin and require hospital treatment
- NEVER eat dry ice: same idea

Put newspaper on the bottom of the cooler, then your block of dry ice, then another layer of newspaper.

Dry Ice will "gas off"—your cooler will have to pop open from time to time. Use a bungee cord to help the lid automatically re-close. If you seal the cooler tight, it will "blow up" (crack). Do not make "dry ice" bombs—flying items can wound people

Anything that touches dry ice will freeze solid. Put today's items far away from it, keep tomorrow's items nearer it.

Get great advice on your meal planning and preparation. If you've been camping with the troop, you've seen some meals already—start with those. Talk with Scouts and Scouters to get their ideas and recommendations. When you meet with other Scouts, ask what their favorite meals are—this is a great way to get new ideas fast! Use a camping-friendly cookbook: Ann Specht's "**Dutch Oven**" Cookbook accompanies this planning book, and it has over 400 camp-friendly recipes for main meals, drinks, snacks, desserts, etc! But wait, there's more! The BSA sells lots of books that are helpful—one's that I've purchased include *The Scout's Outdoor Cookbook* by Christine & Tim Conners, *Camp Cookery for Small Groups (Recipies for groups of eight)* by the BSA, the *Deck of Outdoor Cooking* by the BSA, there are jewels tucked away in places you wouldn't first think to look—like the *Fieldbook* by the BSA, your *Scouting* magazine, and--yes—even your *Scout Handbook*! There is also *The Internet*...



HOW DO THE MEALS GET PLANNED?

The keys to success are to plan early³, to break a big job down into small ones, and to “Git ‘R Done”!

3 weeks before camp

- Patrol records who will go on the activity.
- Patrol decides who is then going to be Grubmaster⁴. GrubMaster tells his parents he has to buy food!
- The Patrol Leader helps the GrubMaster start meal planning (if you have anything left over from the last campout, use it first—ask the QuarterMaster!).
- The Patrol Leader assigns the activity meal duties () & tells the SPL and SM.



2 weeks before camp

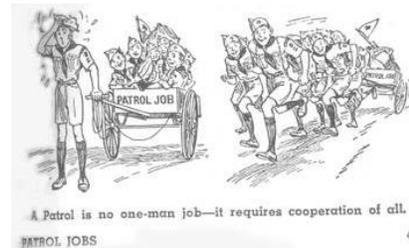
- GrubMaster finishes the meal planning forms (Figure 2, Figure 3) and get all approval(s).
- Let the Patrol Quartermaster know what equipment is needed for cooking.
- Patrol Leader should check to see if anyone needs cooking for their rank.

1 week before camp

- Review everything with the Patrol Leader.
- Check with the Patrol Quartermaster that all equipment needed is available.
- Patrol Scribe collects the money from Scouts for their food, gives it to Troop Treasurer.

Meeting Before Campout

- Make sure you have cooler and dry food storage box.
- Purchase all supplies, keep receipts for Patrol Scribe.



Before departure

- If any food needs advance preparation / ice, the GrubMaster ensures it gets done.

The day of departure

- Inform the Patrol Leader that you have all the food for the trip.

³ Boy Scouts use a “4 Troop Meeting Planning Process”—there are always at least 4 things in stages of planning!

⁴ The GrubMaster is appointed by the Patrol Leader to purchase the food for the Patrol during an activity (excepting activities where food is provided, like Summer Camp, or if the Troop centrally supplies food as a special event). The Patrol Leader should be the first GrubMaster each year, to set the example, then this duty should be shared by patrol members. The GrubMaster must be a Scout who is going on the activity!

A note for parents: Parental advice, input, and transportation are important to the Grubmaster’s success. The Grubmaster is the Scout. He is expected to plan and purchase for the outing. This means that the Grubmaster goes to the store also, not just the parent(s). Parental advice about nutrition and price comparison at the store is important. Let them add it up as your helping him shop, he may have to put back some more expensive items to stay within budget.

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PATROL DUTY ROSTER

PATROL: _____	PATROL LEADER: _____
GRUBMASTER: _____	

MEAL	SATURDAY BREAKFAST	SATURDAY LUNCH	SATURDAY DINNER	SUNDAY BREAKFAST	OTHER
COOKING					
FIREMASTER					
WATER					
CLEANUP					
TENT REVIEW					

JOB DESCRIPTIONS:

GRUBMASTER: Goes shopping and purchases food for the patrol, leads Patrol in grace before meals, responsible for the transporting and storing of food. He also schedules who is cooking/preparing every meal.

COOKS: Prepare meals, and wash utensils used for preparation as necessary. Boils water for dish washing immediately after cooking.

FIREMASTER: Gathers/Brings firewood, starts fire when instructed by PL or Cook, maintains fire, extinguishes fire

WATER CREW: Gets drinking water and wash water for entire patrol. Prepares cleanup station.

CLEANUP CREW: Wash dishes, clean up eating area at campsite, builds and maintains sump hole.

TENT REVIEW: Makes sure all tents are properly setup, each tent has warning flags on lines, rain flies are setup, and tents staked down.

OTHER: Any other duties the SPL or PL assign.

Figure 1 Courtesy of NSDBSA.ORG Patrol Notebook

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Patrol / Menu Planner

Day	Meal	Menu	Cooking Gear	Clean up
Friday	Cracker Barrel			
Saturday	Breakfast	Entrée :		
		Side :		
		Beverage :		
		Fruit :		
	Lunch	Entrée :		
		Side :		
		Beverage :		
		Desert :		
	Dinner	Entrée :		
		Side :		
		Beverage :		
		Desert :		
Sunday	Breakfast	Entrée :		
		Side :		
		Beverage :		
		Fruit :		

Approved by:

Patrol Leader

Senior Patrol Leader

ASM or Mentor

Figure 2 Patrol Menu Planner

(Courtesy of Troop 223)

Shopping List

Buyer 1: _____

Buyer 2: _____

Item	Description	Qty	Est. Cost	Actual cost
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
			Total Cost	
			Cost per Scout	
			Budget per Scout	
			Over/Under Budget by	

Do not spend more than the budget!
Be sure to turn in receipts!!

An adult's advice, guidance, and help are needed to get to the store and prepare the food. The Scout plans the menu, goes to the store, selects and purchases the food and may need to do some pre- preparation before the campout.

Figure 3 Shopping List

(Courtesy of Troop 223)

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After the activity

- Food that is OK but won't keep may be split up among Patrol Members.
- The Patrol Scribe gives the receipts to the Troop Treasurer, who reimburses the GrubMaster.
- The GrubMaster gives any excess non-perishable food or items to the QuarterMaster.

Recap of Menu Requirements

1. The menu must be planned at a Troop meeting two weeks before the campout.
2. The menu plan must be approved by the SPL and scoutmaster.
3. All meals will correspond to the four basic food groups.
4. Meals must be fully prepared at the campout.
5. No hot dog-type meals (except around the campfire as a snack).
6. Soft drinks are not allowed. Water is always available as dehydration is a major concern due to the physical activity at outings.
7. Food preparation is always directed toward fulfilling the requirements of the 1st Class or cooking merit badge.
8. Recipes should come from the Scout Field Book, the Boy Scout Handbook, or other approved cookbooks.
9. Stay within your budget.

Menu Suggestions

Breakfast

Entrée	Sides	Beverage	Fruit
Cold Cereal	Toast	Orange Juice	Bananas
Regular Oatmeal	Bagels & CC	Apple Juice	Raisins
Scrambled Eggs	English Muffins	Grape Juice	Strawberries
Egg McMuffins	Canadian Bacon	Milk	Fruit Cups
Breakfast Burritos	Sausage	Hot Chocolate	Apples
Omelets	Bacon	Water	Oranges
Pancakes	Ham	Tangerines	

Lunch

Entree	Sides	Beverage	Dessert
P & J	Bananas	Fruit Punch	Cookies
Grilled Cheese/Ham	Apples	Ice Tea	Fig Newton
Hoagies	Oranges	Milk	Snack Pies
Tuna Sandwich	Crackers	Lemonade	Twinkies
Chicken Salad	Energy Bars	Hot Chocolate	
Soup or Chili	Fruit Cups	Tang	
Beans & Franks	Cheese / Salami	Water	

Dinner

Entrée	Sides	Beverage	Dessert
Beef or Chicken Stew	Bread/Rolls	Fruit Punch	Cake
Spaghetti	Potatoes	Water	Cobbler
Macaroni & Cheese	Dumplings	Milk	Canned Fruit
Hamburger Helper	Corn	Lemonade	Snack Pies
Chili	Carrots	Hot Chocolate	Pudding
Pot Roast	Celery	Ice Tea	Jell-O
Tacos	Coleslaw		
Foil Meals			

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COST

Meals should cost about \$3 - 5 per person (so a patrol of 8 Scouts would have a per-meal budget of $\$5 \times 8 = \40). In the course of a campout, some meals (like a breakfast or lunch) might be cheaper (perhaps \$3 per person) so a main meal could come in at a higher cost (perhaps \$7 per person). A typical campout would have a snack Friday night, three meals Saturday, and a breakfast Sunday—for a campout meal budget of \$200 ($\$5 \text{ per meal} \times 5 \text{ meals} \times 8 \text{ Scouts}$) for a patrol of 8 Scouts [Hint: \$25 per person].

Meal cost isn't just food, but includes anything specially needed for that meal (spices, aluminum foil, ziplock bags, paper towels, special fuels, Ice, etc). Check with the QuarterMaster to know what the troop already has on-hand in the Trailer—don't buy the same thing twice! Sometimes you will have to buy more than you need for a meal—get creative on how to re-use it in order to cut costs of later meals. For example, a sack of potatoes could be used for dinner, and then leftover potatoes could be used for a breakfast too. Same idea with Bell Peppers, Onions, Bread, etc.

Your budget may seem big, but when you go shopping you will quickly learn that food is expensive!

SHOPPING

The GrubMaster should go with his parents/guardian to shop. If money is needed upfront, get a check from the Troop Treasurer—but ideally, parents will settle up with the Troop Treasurer after the activity (it is important to not spend more than was budgeted, because that was what was collected from the Scouts!). If the shopping comes in under budget, great!—the Troop Treasurer will wind up crediting the individual Scout accounts.



Do price comparisons when shopping. This will help you stay within your budget. Consider the overall cost of the item, how many servings it will provide, and the cost per serving. Sometimes larger sizes are better, but you won't save money if you purchase 12 servings and you only need 6.

Try to stick to the menu your patrol planned. Don't change things just because you like something else better. You can make some adjustments if something turns out to be too expensive or you can't find what was planned, but try to stick with the general ideas your patrol wanted.

You may not need to actually walk the aisles at the grocery store; more and more places (like Sams, Costco, etc) will let you shop online, then they will have your cart ready when you want to pick it up! They usually won't have everything you need, and may only stock sizes that are too big...but if it works, it may save you time.

PACKING THE FOOD

The food should be brought with you to the departure location, already packed in boxes and coolers and ready to go. Pack smartly – ie. keep raw meats away from stuff like fruit. Pack the menu also so the patrol knows what they are supposed to cook for each meal.

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Do you like squished bread for sandwiches? Pack the food in ways to protect it while it is transported to the campsite. Zip-lock type plastic bags are an excellent choice. At-home preparation will also make cooking at camp easier and quicker. Examples:



Scrambled eggs: Scramble the raw eggs at home and placed in a tightly sealed container.

Diced meats and veggies (chicken, carrots, celery): Wash and dice at home and put in separate zip bags.

Bacon or sausage: Pre-cook at home. Works great and eliminates grease to make clean-up easier.

It is easier to prepare meals inside in a nice warm kitchen with running water than outside in a barren cold campsite with pouring rain!

PREPARING THE FOOD

Cleaning

The Patrol washes before handling any food—before fixing it or coming to eat it. The GrubMaster makes sure this is done—no one wants to get sick!



Keep the food “clean” too—keep it separated. Don’t mix raw meat with things that won’t be cooked with it. This doesn’t just mean put it in a separate bowl or pot, but also don’t cut the meat and then use that same uncleaned knife to cut the apples/etc—wash it first, or use a different knife.

Cutting

Remember that your Totin’ Chit rules aren’t just for whittling or the axe yard—stay safe when using kitchen knives around others too. If a Scout cuts his finger he may panic and start twirling around with his knife, possibly cutting the person next to him! It is best to have an adult be a safety spotter when things are getting cut or diced—don’t be shy about asking the adult for tips on how to safely cut things.

Keep your cutting area uncluttered! As you cut a little of something, place it in a bowl. A side benefit is that if someone gets a cut, less food will have to be thrown out—never serve food with someone’s blood on it! If someone knicks their finger, they have to get first aid and leave the kitchen.

Cooking

There are many ways to cook things! The higher you are in elevation, the longer it will take to cook! If you need a fire, get it ready ahead of time—you want an evenly-burning fire with a base of coals, not an uneven bonfire! You can use coals of a campfire by wrapping meals in aluminum foil (“Foil Packs”) or by putting coals under and on top of a Dutch Oven. You can cook over a campfire, either on a grill or griddle, on spits/hot dog tines, or using pie irons. You can use low-impact cooking. You can cook on a propane-powered camp stove or small cook stove. You can use liquid fuel (backpacking) stoves. You can cook in ziplock bags in boiling water (“Bag Meals”).

Each cooking method has it’s own tips and tricks, and you should learn as many as you can. Have your PLC add cooking methods to the “Skills Instruction” part of Troop meetings!

WHY NOT JUST HAVE THE ADULTS DO IT?

"The patrol method is not a way to operate a Boy Scout troop, it is the only way."

"The object of the patrol method is not so much having the Scoutmaster trouble as to give responsibility to the boy."

"It is the Patrol System that makes the Troop, and all Scouting for that matter, a real co-operative matter."

"The patrol system leads each boy to see that he has some individual responsibility for the good of his patrol."



Lord Robert Baden-Powell



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REFERENCES

Ann Specht's "Dutch Oven" Cookbook

Boy Scout Fieldbook: <http://fieldbook.scouting.org/>

Boy Scout Handbook: <http://www.bsahandbook.org/>

Boy's Life Magazine: <http://boyslife.org/>

Camp Cookery:

http://www.lagerquist.com/daycamp/NCS_Drive/Alpha%20Listing/Camp%20Cookery%20for%20Small%20Groups%2033592.pdf

Deck of Outdoor Cooking: <http://www.scoutstuff.org/book-sct-deck-outdr-recipe.html#.Ve4CnvIVhBc>

Guide to Safe Scouting: <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34416.pdf>

Scouting Magazine: <http://scoutingmagazine.org/>

The Scout's Outdoor Cookbook: <http://www.falcon.com/books/scouts-outdoor-cookbook>

Many thanks to the Scouters, websites, and books from whose knowledge this was compiled. I've tried to properly credit the major sources, but apologize if I've missed any.