

Tips for Sleeping in Cold Weather

Some tips to keep in mind when your troop takes on winter camping.

- Dress right while sleeping. Change into clean, dry clothes before bed. Your body makes moisture and your clothes hold it in - by changing into dry clothes you will stay warmer and it will help keep the inside of your sleeping bag dry. Wearing wool socks and long underwear (tops and bottoms) in the sleeping bag is OK.
- Wear a stocking cap to bed, even if you have a mummy bag.
- Put tomorrow's clothes in your bag with you. This way the clothes are warm when you put them on in the morning.
- Fill a couple of Nalgene water bottles with warm water and sleep with one between your legs (warms the femoral artery) and with one at your feet. Or use toe/hand warmers. Toss them into your sleeping bag before you get in. Some of the toe/hand warmers will last 8 hours.
- Eat a high-energy snack before bed, then brush your teeth. The extra fuel will help your body stay warm. Take a Snickers bar to bed and eat it if you wake up chilly in the night.
- Use a sleeping bag that is appropriate for the conditions. Two +20°F sleeping bags, one inside the other will work to lower the rating of both bags. Other ways to increase the effectiveness of your bag are to use a sleeping bag liner or a bivvy sack wrapped around your sleeping bag.
- Most cold weather bags are designed to trap heat. The proper way to do this is to pull the drawstrings until the sleeping bag is around your face, not around your neck.
- Don't burrow in - keep your mouth and nose outside the bag. Moisture from your breath collecting in your bag is a quick way to get real cold. Keep the inside of the bag dry.
- Don't sleep directly on the ground. Get a closed cell foam pad to provide insulation between your sleeping bag and the ground. A foam pad cushions and insulates. The air pockets are excellent in providing good insulation properties.
- No cots or air mattresses! Better to lay on with 30° earth instead of -10° air.
- A space blanket or silver lined tarp on the floor of the tent or under your sleeping bag will reflect your heat back to you.
- If in tents, leave the tent flaps/zippers vented a bit, it cuts down on interior frost.
- Drain your bladder before you go to bed. Having to go in the middle of the night when it is 5 degrees out chills your entire body. Drink all day, but stop one hour before bed.

Source: "Winter Camping Tips", <http://www.boyscouttrail.com/library/wintercampingtips.asp>
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